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GOLDEN DAYS.

BY M. E. S.

It is withered and brown, my girlie,
But once it was all aglow
With beauty and grace, in the dear glad days
That vanished long, long ago:
And I would not change my nosegay, dear,
For the fairest flow'rs that blow,
For it takes me back to the golden days
When my lost one loved me so.

This was once a snow-white rosebud,
And he said I was just as fair,
As he laid it amid my shining braids
Of my long, long golden hair;
And this was a bonnie bluebell,
That danced in the Summer air,
And he said that my blue eyes, girlie,
Had a hue more rich and rare.

And here is a lily, darling,
That he plucked on an August day;
And here are the pink-tipped daisies,
That smiled in the sunshine gay;
And these were the first Spring snowdrops
That he gave ere he went away—
But we never dreamt, my girlie,
That our parting was for aye.

HER TALISMAN.

BY M. G. L.

[CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK.]

THE next day brought with it again the glorious summertide. The birds were chirping in the golden air when Sir Robert came down to an early breakfast in what we may call his ancestral hall, seeing that he had actually had a grandfather who lived in it. He had made up his mind to go and inspect the work at his mine, where he hoped every day that the seam of iron ore would be reached that was to enrich him for life, or the coal be found that Shorte and Sharpe told him might be opened out at any moment.

The bomb-shell had not exploded yet, for he had forgotten all about the letter which his friend the colonel had given him to read. When he returned last night he had kissed his old mother, who was very infirm and rarely moved from her own rooms, and told her of his glorious news.

Maudie was to be her daughter; and the old lady petted him as she used to do when he was a child, and then shed a few quiet tears, which were tears of pride and happiness more than sadness. But the old have ever a silver thread of sorrow interwoven with the brightest golden thoughts.

Morning had come and Sir Robert was off to his El Dorado.

When he reached the point where a shelving tunnel sloped down out of sight into the hillside, with great heaps of debris piled up on both sides, he found a fustian-clad workman seated quietly on a hillock of stones smoking a black cutty pipe.

"Good-morning, my man," said Sir Robert. "Is the overseer about? I want to go down into the workings."

The man gazed at him indifferently, evidently not knowing who he was.

"No admission, guv'nor; them's my horders. Old Morgan ain't here, and nobody goes in excep' the boss takes him round."

Sir Robert was taken aback.

"Well, where is he? Tell him I want to see him."

"Oh, he ain't a-come yet, and maybe he won't be here for a hour or more. And wot's more, guv'nor, I guess he won't let yer see the bloomin' mine when he does come. There was a feller came spyin' about last week, and the old boss has got cute. He says his horders from the lawyer fellers hup there is to keep things on the Q. T."

The young baronet felt a sudden rush of anger sweeping over his astonished soul.

"Look here, my good man, do you know who I am?"

"Well, guv'nor, I guess you've been sent here by that young fool at the Hall yonder. Why doesn't he look after his own property hissel? Heverybody looks after hissel' in this world, or it he don't, wot d'ye expect? Anyway, you can't see the diggins till old Morgan comes. Do yer think yer could give me a plug of bacca, guv'nor, 'cos my pipe is a-going hout?"

With an effort to restrain his temper, Sir Robert determined to leave the matter alone for the present to return to the Hall and send a letter to the overseer by a servant, requesting his presence in the course of the afternoon.

In connection with the plug of "bacca" he put his hand into his side pocket and pulled out his tobacco pouch, and with it a letter—the bomb-shell which had not yet exploded. He gave about an ounce of bird's eye to the surly workman, who would have appreciated pig-tail much better, and turned on his heel.

He walked a couple of hundred yards along a beaten pathway trying to persuade himself that there was nothing on to be alarmed about. Mr. Morgan might be a very scrupulous and conscientious manager, who did not want his employers' affairs to be exposed to the public.

But it was no use. When the suspicion of a truth flashes upon us the truth itself is already half exposed to view. He sat down on a stile that crossed his way, over which a spreading ash stretched its branches, shading him from the growing heat of the sun.

From this rustic perch his eye roamed over undulating corn fields and meadow lands which were all his own; and the gable ends of his happy home, to which he hoped so soon to bring a blushing bride, were just visible in the distance. Could it be that the mine was a bubble? Could it be that he had no resources to repay the heavy mortgages on the estate? Impossible!

Only three days ago Mr. Shorte had told him with a smile that there was no reason whatever for anxiety. It was true that a heavy sum was due in a few days for interest on mortgages—about five thousand dollars, he understood—but that would be arranged by the firm. He recalled every word that the senior partner had said.

But what was this letter in his hand? Oh, something about Maudie that Colonel Stapleton had given him to read. He would see it at once. He opened the envelope and read Lord Dawlish's short epistle.

No explosion of dynamite that did not actually kill ever left a man more dazed than the poor young baronet was when the airy sentences had conveyed their full meaning to his mind. There it was in black and white:

"Either he doesn't know his business or else he is playing a game. He is sinking shafts and running adits just where he shouldn't. My man thinks the property looks likely, but he says he thinks Taffy isn't straight. Hope you haven't invested."

And this from a man whom Sir Robert only knew by name, but who had the reputation of being the most experienced mine owner in the country.

How Sir Robert got home he hardly knew. He walked like a man in a dream. Once there he locked himself into the library and paced up and down. Was he on the brink of ruin? Was his dream of love and fortune to be but the baseless fabric of a vision? a mere mirage seen for a moment and doomed to melt away like the airy phantasies of the desert?

At last he paused. "After all," he said aloud, "it is only a suspicion. Perhaps this Morgan, or whatever his name is, does not understand the mine, and Shorte and Sharpe are acting honorably after all. Lord Dawlish's man says himself that the mine looks 'likely.' Anyway, I will write at once."

And so he did. He went to his writing desk and in a firm hand wrote fully to his city lawyers. He told them that he had good reason for believing that the manager whom they had sent down was not carrying out the exploration in a satisfactory manner, that no immediate success was anticipated, and that he thought it would be better to secure a more experienced man. He ended by alluding to the heavy sum which would fall due for interest on the mortgages in a few days, and thanked Messrs. Shorte and Sharpe for kindly undertaking to induce the mortgagees not to press for immediate payment, or to arrange it themselves if necessary.

But Sir Robert was a miserable man. The dumb animals have a strange prophetic feeling when a thunderstorm or an earthquake is about to shake the world, and we of the higher creation, as we are proud to call ourselves, often share their sensation of a coming terror before misfortune bursts on us.

This was the case with poor Sir Robert. Oh, for the pity of it. He had trusted his father's old solicitors as he trusted heaven. Youth is linked with confidence as age with suspicion. And he had never doubted them. They had told him that his estate was perfectly safe because the iron mines (to say nothing about the possibility of coal) would wipe away all the mortgages and in the meantime he might live abroad and enjoy himself.

And now he saw for the first time that he was absolutely in their power. He had trusted them and leant on them as a child leans on its parents, knowing it is safe. Now a flash of lightning seemed to come out of a cloud and showed him the truth, that where business comes in at the door, friendship flies out at the window.

But why linger on the young baronet's sad thoughts? He felt a great blow was coming. Two weary days he waited for a letter from Shorte and Sharpe. There was nothing to do but wait. He would not go over to Delhi Cottage, because he would not risk seeing his darling again until his fate was sealed. If he were a ruined man, farewell to Maudie, farewell to happiness, farewell to home.

He would see that his dear old mother, who had a little annuity of her own was settled as comfortably as her means allowed and then he would emigrate to the far west, which had always had a fascination for him, and at the worst he could turn cowboy and hold his own. The spirit of youth was still alive in his breast, and if it had not been for Maudie and his old mother, he thought he could afford to whistle at the loss of all his fortune.

In due course the lawyers' letter was delivered at the Hall. It was brought into the breakfast room with several others by the footman on a silver tray. Sir Robert recognized it in a moment, placed it with the others quietly on one side and helped himself to a little more cold pigeon pie. He was breakfasting alone, reading a local morning paper.

"George," said Sir Robert.

"Yes, Sir Robert," said the footman.

"Take these letters into the library and leave them on the table. I'll read them presently."

"Yes, Sir Robert." But the footman wondered why he didn't open his letters at once as ordinarily constructed mortals of both sexes always do. He disappeared with the letters, however, and Sir Robert proceeded with his pigeon pie and his paper, in alternate bites, so to speak. Presently George reappeared looking rather flurried.

"Beg your pardon, Sir Robert, but there's a man at the hall door says he wants to see you very particular"

"Indeed," said Sir Robert, "pray who is the gentleman?"

"He ain't no gentleman at all," burst out George in all the fullness of his heart; "he's a low-bred blay-gard, that's what he is—and what's more, he's drunk."

"Then tell him to go away."

"So I did, Sir Robert, and he cussed and swore that hawful and put his foot in between the door like, as I thought I must have hup to him and knocked him down."

Now George was of a distinctly weak physique, and for him to be "up" and face a "blay-gard," who was made rather exuberant by early potations, was so obviously out of the question, that Sir Robert rose from the table at once, saying quietly, "All right, George, don't mind; I'll attend to him."

And as George gazed at the broad shoulders and athletic figure of the young baronet disappearing through the doorway, he chuckled with a feeling of already satisfied vengeance and said: "Now you'll catch it, you tipsy old scoundrel! Call me a pumpkin head indeed! My master will give you a pumpkin head, I do hope to mussy!" George way evidently very angry.

But Sir George was not animated by pugilistic thoughts as he strode into the entrance hall. One glance at his footman's foe, who sure enough had pushed himself right into the house, sufficed to show him that it was no other than the fustian-clad laborer who was acting as sentry the other day at the entrance to the mine.

"Oh, it's you, is it? My good fellow I remember your face. What is it you want here?"

"Want to see you, guv'nor; my name's Jim Thompson. You see I didn't know as you were the barronit yersel' when gave me a plug bacca t'other day, or p'raps I might ha' split then. Perhaps I might and perhaps I mightn't. But me and the boss can't pull together no longer, and blest if I don't blow on the whole plant."

Sir Robert, who had not listened to a word he said, interrupted him pretty brusquely:

"Look here, my good man, if you have anything to say to me you had better take a walk outside and come back in about a quarter of an hour; I shall be free then."

The fact was that he felt it was cowardise to put off reading his letter any longer. It had to be faced, and the sooner the better. So he let Jim go for a stroll, and he walked into his library. He read his other letters first, and then tore open the one from Shorte and Sharpe. A lingering hope still fluttered at his heart, but it flew away as his eyes rested on the first words.

"DEAR SIR ROBERT:—

"We were on the point of writing to you when we received your favor of the 27th inst. We regret to inform you that we have failed to induce the mortgagees to postpone the payment of interest due by you on the 1st prox., and in view of the report which you give us of the mining prospects on your estate, which has taken us completely by surprise, it will be impossible for us to obtain for you

any further advances. As, however, we should deeply regret the foreclosure that you anticipate, which would entail, we fear, the loss of the entire Burnside estate, as it is mortgaged to its full value, we trust you will be able to forward to us on or before the 1st prox. a cheque for $5 625, the interest payable by you on that date. We have every reason to be satisfied that Mr. David Morgan is an upright and competent miner, and we feel sure that any failure in the prospects of the mine is not due as you suppose to his want of capacity, but to the nature of the enterprise, which we deeply regret. We are, etc., your obedient servants,

"SHORTE AND SHARPE."

Sir Robert read the letter twice over; the second time very carefully, word by word, as if it were a matter of business that referred to some unfortunate client who was no acquaintance of his. He noted how every word he had said against the prospects of the mine was taken hold of and made an excuse. He had been cheated by the lawyers.

The mine like other mines, was a possibility and a speculation. But the lawyers had involved him in debt till he was a fly in a spider's web, and now behold the two spiders having got him fairly caught in their airy meshes were gently stealing down, as spiders do, to suck his blood.

Sir Robert folded the letter and placed it in his pocket. For a few moments he leant his elbow on the table and leaned his face upon his hand. Then he rose to his feet in all the grandeur of his youthful strength.

"I have life before me," he said, "and health and a clear conscience. I have lost my father's estate; I have lost my inheritance. But I will make a hard fight not to lose my darling Maudie. I love her! I love her! I love her! I will work for her. I will go to her and ask her to wait for me. Surely if other men can work their way to fortune I can do the same."

He raised his hand in the air and broke out into a smile. "God willing," he said, "I will be the hewer of my own fortune!"

He walked out into the hall, took up his hat, and paused for a moment. Then he [illegible] mounted the staircase, two [illegible], and went into his mother's [illegible]. He kissed her on both cheeks, after the continental fashion, and said:

"Mother, dear, don't be anxious about what I have to say. I think we shall have to give up the old place. But I fancy I can make you quite as comfortable in town. I am going up in a day or two to find quarters for you."

"But, dear Robert, this is so sudden."

"Yes, but, mother dear, don't ask me questions; trust me. Whatever I do my first thought shall be for you."

"Trust you, my dear boy, I always did and always will. You look very pale and anxious. Tell me what has happened."

"Mother dear, I will tell you to-morrow. Don't fret; it is a passable trouble. All troubles pass away, you know."

And then he kissed her again, and the old lady shed another tear or two because she thought her darling boy was in sorrow; but she never doubted him, and she felt as if no trouble could ever touch her, because her son was true and noble and strong, and he loved her.

The young baronet strode out of his father's home to walk over to Delhi Cottage. He had determined to see Maudie to tell her everything.

He would give her her liberty if she wished it, but would plead for time, a couple of years, perhaps, while he was away in the far West, and then she could say yes or no.

She was so young, only eighteen, and in two years' time she would not yet be of age. Thoughts were rushing through his brain like the clouds that sweep over the heavens when the strong north wind is blowing before a storm. And youth is full of hope.

He had not walked many yards before he came up to the poetical navvy, who was contentedly smoking his black pipe, seated on a heap of gravel.

"Blest if you ain't a long time a-coming, guv'nor. Old pumpkin head would not open the door again, but told me through the winder as you was a-coming out directly."

"Oh, it's you, is it?" said Sir Robert, who had forgotten all about him. "I'm afraid I am too busy to talk about your affairs just now."

"Oh, that's yer little game, is it?" said Jim.

"Come to the Hall to morrow. No, to-morrow is Sunday; come on Monday morning, and I'll do what I can for you." Sir Robert had a vague idea that Jim was going to ask some favor for himself, and the grim idea struck him that on Monday, August the first, he would have the dramatic pleasure of telling him that he must transfer his application to Messrs. Shorte and Sharpe.

"Well, hang me," said Jim, "I'm blowed if I don't go and square it with the boss."

The young baronet was hurrying away, but fortunately he turned round again. "Oh, I forgot; you'll want some more 'baccy. Here you are, my worthy friend," and he searched in his side pocket for his tobacco pouch. He had left it at home, so he opened his cigar case and gave Jim half-a-dozen cigars instead.

"All right; don't forget to come on Monday morning, and then we'll have a talk," and so saying he stepped out on his way to the old colonel's with a sad heart indeed, but a firm tread, as a man should have who has done no wrong and can face the arrows of outrageous fortune with calm fortitude.

"Dash my buttons, but the barronite is a stunner; so he is," cried Jim. "I'll jest go down to the second level and git some specimens for to show him on Monday morning. Now, Morgan, ole boss, you look out for squalls. I ain't a-goin' to pick chesnuts out o' the' fire for thee any more."

Jim Thompson's mind was evidently made up; the handful of cigars had turned the scale.

* * * * * *

When Sir Robert reached Delhi Cottage a terrible disappointment was in store for him. Maudie had gone off with her friends Violet and Rosalie Leonard on a few days' visit. The girls had pressed her to go with them, and the old colonel thought it would do her good, because she was looking a little pale and unlike her usual self.

Like so many loving-hearted relatives who insist on knowing what is good for others better than they know themselves, he had insisted on Maudie going. "The change will do you good, darling," he had said to her, "and you can come back next week, you know, in time for the ball." Sometimes

It was a great blow to Sir Robert, but he made up his mind at once to breathe no word about Maud to her grandfather, unless he alluded to her himself. Sir Robert was under the impression that the colonel knew all about his engagement, but for all that he would be silent till he could first speak to Maud herself.

So he merely mentioned his pecuniary plight, or rather, as he called it himself, his "grand smash." In the quietest of tones he explained the whole case to his father's old friend.

"You see," he said, "my father began the mortgages, and I have gone on, trusting to Shorte and Sharpe. The estate is mortgaged up to the hilt. This is Saturday, the 30th of July, and unless I pay five thousand six hundred and twenty-five dollars on Monday everything passes out of my hands and I am a beggar. I know you could not help me, my dear colonel, even if you would, but I have just come over to explain the case to you so that you will understand why my mother and I leave so suddenly, as we shall before the end of next week. I have marred my own fortune, and I must abide the issue."

What could the poor old colonel say? He sympathized with him, and consoled him, and condoled with him, and squeezed his hand as he said good-bye, and, as a parting word of comfort, said he hoped he would soon hear better news from him. How much more can, or will, our nearest and dearest friends do for us?

And when Sir Robert was gone, the good-natured old colonel took up his pen and wrote a long letter to Maudie, hoping she had arrived safely with Violet and Rosie at Thomas' Hotel, where Sir Roger Leonard was staying. Then he told her all about poor Bobbie's visit and all his sorrow.

"You see he has come to grief at last, as I always expected his father would do before him. Unless he pays five thousand six hundred and twenty-five dollars to those old scoundrels, Shorte and Sharpe, on Monday he will be ruined, because all the estate is mortgaged. You had better not say anything about it to Violet because we had better wait, you know."

The colonel, like many old men, was fond of writing long letters, and though he wrote this one with sincere grief, yet he stated the facts accurately, and finished in good time for the Saturday afternoon post.

He little knew what the result of that letter would be. It duly reached the city on Sunday morning, July 31st, but was not put into Miss Stapleton's hands until Monday morning, August the first.

* * * * * *

On Monday morning Jim Thompson strolled up to Burnside Hall, smoking the last of his Havana cigars.

By a mere coincidence, Sir Robert, who had slept badly, was pacing up and down outside the Hall, smoking a cigar too. As Jim drew near the young baronet laughed a quiet little sardonic laugh against himself, saying: "I suppose I shall soon be a working man, like my visitor there. I wonder if I shall learn to talk slang."

"Good morning, guv'nor," said Jim, who came up smiling with an air of the greatest satisfaction.

"Good morning," returned Sir Robert.

"The hoss has skiddled."

"I don't quite understand," said Mr. Robert.

"I mean old Morgan has hooked it. He and two of his pals as worked in the mine bolted yesterday, 'cos they knew I was a-goin' to blow on 'em."

Sir Robert pricked up his ears at this extraordinary piece of intelligence, and invited Jim to be more explicit. Without giving a verbatim report of Jim's exact explanation, it is enough to say that the fustian-clad workman soon proved to Sir Robert that he was as full of intelligence as a scholar from Oxford. He had his tale in his own way, but it was told clearly and to the point.

Mr. Morgan had engaged him and two other men to work in the mine at good wages and something more, but on condition that they held their tongues. A rich seam of ironstone had been laid bare more than twelve months ago, but Morgan had orders to keep it dark and to run adits and dig shafts in the opposite direction.

This he had done most conscientiously, and with equal conscientiousness his assistants had assured everybody that they had "come upon nought as yet but rubble."

But there the seam was, so Jim averred, and to prove it he brought out of his capacious pocket three lumps of stone, reddish in color, and wonderfully heavy.

"Come and see for yourself, Sir Robert," said Jim; "the other coves have bolted."

The young baronet went, and saw, and was convinced. But alas! it was too late. It was the day of his fate; he has been unable to meet his liabilities, and he well knew that Shorte and Sharpe were far too keen to give him a chance again.

He walked sadly back to his old home, and after giving a handsome tip to his guide, closed the hall door behind him, and, making his way to the library, threw himself wearily into an easy-chair. "It would have been better," he said, "if I had never been born."

He was roused by a knock at the door. "Come in," and enter George.

"A telegram for you, Sir Robert."

"All right, put it on the table there," and George did so, wondering for the second time as he left the room how anybody in his right senses could fail to open letters and telegrams the moment they arrived. George was inexperienced in the sorrows of life.

Sir Robert, on the other hand, felt that that telegram would seal his fate; and he was quite right.

* * * * * *

At Thomas' Hotel, Berkeley Square, the letters were brought up to the visitors' bedrooms. Consequently Miss Maud Stapleton received her grandfather's garrulous letter on Monday morning before she had got out of bed.

At breakfast time Sir Roger and Lady Leonard and the five boys and the two girls made their appearance one after the other, and sat down in the brightest and happiest of moods to the breakfast table. But their guest did not appear.

After a time the waiter was told to ask the chambermaid to go up to Miss Stapleton and tell her that breakfast was ready. Presently the waiter returned to say that the chambermaids had said that Miss Stapleton was not upstairs, and that the porter had said that Miss Stapleton had left a message when she went out to say that she hoped to be back for lunch, but if not they were not to wait for her.

Surprise sat upon every face, but Sir Roger, who prided himself on knowing the ways of the female sex—which no male human being ever did yet—said quietly: "Oh, yes; it's all right; I quite understand. Maudie will come back before luncheon time. Waiter, bring another egg."

Meanwhile poor Maudie had gone through the agonies of despair and wrath and anguish. To them had succeeded the faint glimmer of hope. She remembered that her poor dead father had left her a small annuity, from which she received one hundred and fifty dollars a year thro' the Oriental Bank—the bank, which her grandpapa also dealt with.

She would go at once to the manager of that bank, and beg him, on her bended knees, if need be, to give her five thousand six hundred and twenty-five dollars, and she would give up everything of her own for the future.

She did not wait to think, but dressed herself as quickly as she could, and, leaving a message with the porter of the hotel, went out to find a cab. She hailed a hansom, and told the driver to take her to the Oriental Bank.

"Yes, miss, whereabouts is it?"

"I don't exactly know; don't you?"

"No, miss; somewhere in the City, I suppose?"

"Yes; the street has a funny name—Needle and-thread Street, or something like that."

"Oh, Threadneedle Street, Miss," said Jehu, with a broad grin. "I'll find it; jump in, miss."

And in a half-a-minute Maudie was being driven whither she scarcely knew, with her thoughts all in a whirl, hoping and fearing what was going to happen. She put her hand into her pocket to see if she had her purse with her, and found that was all safe, and also that she had with her her old plaything, the ring that her father had bequeathed to her. She smiled as she drew it out and placed it on her finger.

"Oh, that it would bring me sunshine to-day," she cried; "there is sunshine enough in the sky, but Robert and I are wrapt up in clouds. Still, there is hope."

She replaced it in her pocket, and her thoughts traveled back to the chance of obtaining the much needed money from the manager of the Oriental Bank. She was soon at her destination.

She entered through the swinging doors of the heavy stone building, which had only just been opened for the day, and as she looked about rather bewildered a clerk came up to her and asked her respectfully if he could be a service to her.

"Is this the Oriental Bank?" said Maud, feeling very nervous.

"Yes, miss; have you any business with us?"

"I want to see the manager, if you please."

"I am not sure if the manager is in his office yet, but I will see. Will you give me your name, if you please?"

"Yes, I am Miss Stapleton and I live in Devonshire. My grandfather is Colonel Stapleton."

"Thank you, miss; I will see if the manager can see you."

It is a curious thing that in the city, where a man would be kept waiting for an hour, there is always admission for a young and charming lady. Whether it was due to this psychological fact or to the circumstance that as the bank had only just opened, business had scarcely begun, true it is that Miss Stapleton was introduced without any delay to the sacred precincts of the manager's office.

This dignified official was opening his letters—and very formidable he looked sitting at a large table facing the door as Maude entered. He raised his eyes for a moment, and as he did so, the stern business look on his face melted down in a curious way into one of benignity.

"Oh, Miss—Steeplehurst—"

"Stapleton, sir."

"Stapleton, of course. Will you sit down? What is it you require?"

Maudie's heart beat fiercely, but she controlled herself and took a seat opposite to the bald-headed and gray bearded manager, and after a moment's hesitation she explained in simple and clear language what she had come to ask for.

She had an annuity of one hundred and fifty dollars a year, which was paid to her by or through the Oriental Bank, and she wanted the manager to be kind enough to give her five thousand six hundred and twenty five dollars to-day instead of it, as she required the money most urgently.

The manager stroked his bald head and then stroked his beard.

"My dear young lady, I fear I must disappoint you. It is quite out of my

power to advance anything on your annuity. If you were of age even——"

At this moment, a clerk entered with a card, and handed it to the manager.

"Tell Mr. Ramashan that I shall be at liberty in a few minutes."

"Mr. Ramashan says he won't detain you a moment, but he is in a great hurry."

"Then send him in. You see, Miss Stapleton, that this annuity of youre was purchased for you as a little something that would always be a certainty, and if you——Oh, Mr. Ramashan, I am very busy, as you see. What do you want this morning?"

Mr. Ramashan was a very curious little man. His hair and his long beard were as white as snow, and his eyes peered out from under his thick straight eyebrows as if from that place of concealment they could take a calm view of all mundane manners without making any mistakes.

He was very deliberate in his manner and very decisive in his tone. The moment he opened his mouth it was clear that he was a foreigner. His language had a Hebrew accent, but his nose did not bear out such an inference. Maudie did not listen to what he had to say.

It was something about a bill of exchange, but she was crushed to the very dust by what the manager had told her. There was no hope, no hope! All was so cold, every one was so hard. She heard these two men of money talking, talking, and she said, "I must go."

But the hot tears were rushing into her eyes and she felt for her handkerchief. In drawing it out, her ring came with it and fell and rolled upon the ground.

The manager turned towards her and rising said:

"I am really deeply grieved, my dear young lady——"

But Mr. Ramashan had picked up the ring, for which Maudie, overcome as she was, stretched out her hand.

"Vot ish dis!" he exclaimed excitedly. "Vot ish dat ring?"

"Give it me please, sir, and I will go."

"But vere did you get dat ring?" The old gentleman now spoke more deliberately, but with strange energy, while a curious light seemed to come into his half-hidden eyes.

"I cannot tell you about it, sir; give it me and let me go away."

"But—but, dis is very strange; dis is vot never happened before! I vill gif you five hundret dollar for dat ring."

If the old gentleman had offered her this price for her pocket handkerchief Maudie could not have been more astonished. Nor, apparently, could the manager of the bank.

"What do you mean, Mr. Ramashan?" he said. "Let me see the ring. It is silver, evidently, curiously made, and with some sort of an inscription. I can't make out the words. What character are they in? Do you understand them?"

"Onderstand dem? Vy, my friend, dis is a sonshine ring! My young lady, dis is a sonshine ring!"

"Yes, I know that; they say it will bring the sunshine, but it won't."

"Yes, it vill! it vill! it vill! but ven vill you get married? Then it vill give sonshine!"

It was some time before Maudie could get the old gentleman to understand how much she knew about the ring, and how little; and when he had heard her story and how it was found upon the dead body of her father after a great battle his hard eyes softened and he said:

"Vell, I will tell you vot no one else in dis land could tell you perhaps. Dis is a ring from Thibet which princes and great llamas give to their daughters as a marriage portion. You see deese letters. Dey say and dey mean, 'Buddha vill give you sonshine,' and de little letters below tell which stars to press to open de great moon."

And then he went on to explain that the great silver disc was only a case for something that was concealed within, and that the three little marks at the end of the cursive characters were numbers which told the stars that were to be pressed down in order to open the moon-like circle.

He explained that in Thibet, to open the ring before the marriage contract had been signed would be a crime that no one dare commit lest the wrath of offended deities should burst over his head in thunder instead of sunshine, because the ring was a consecrated one, and placed under the protection of Buddha in his capacity of "Lord of the home of marriage."

"Is it that now you go to be married?" persisted the curious old gentleman. "If not, I vill not open a sonshine ring. No! no! I have no fears, vat you call superstitions, but I vould rather not."

Nobody admits that he has any superstitions; yet some people won't walk under a ladder, and some won't sit down thirteen to table, and some won't go to sea on a Friday.

Mr. Hormuiz Ramashan, the Parsee merchant of Bagdad, had no superstitions whatever, but he would not open a sunshine ring consecrated to Buddha unless the young lady who owned it was really going to be married. Such are the contradictions of human nature.

Poor Maudie was so astonished at the whole story and so overpowered by conflicting emotions that only a gentle blush, a faint crimsoning like that of the eastern sky at the breaking of the dawn, overspread her cheeks as she answered, "Yes, sir; I am engaged," and then turning to the manager she added, "It is for him that I want the money."

"Vell, my sharming yung lady, den ve vill open zis ring, and zee how moch sonshine Buddha vill gif you."

The numbers marked on the ring were 1 7 and 12; and Mr. Ramashan explained that these signified that the original giver of the ring had an especial devotion to the second, seventh and twelfth incarnations of Buddha.

To press the second star alone was useless; to press number two and number seven together would be useless; but if the three were all pressed together then the ring would open. To do this was a little difficult.

At first they thought they would have to send for a jeweler, but Mr. Ramashan said, "No; de yung lady must press one star. Ve vill do de odere ourselves. Ve must imgaine dat ve are in a temple of Buddha, and dat I am de bridegroom and dat you are de priest."

The manager of the bank was by this time as interested as the young lady and the old Parsee, and by the aid of nothing more romantic than three penholders, they succeeded in pressing simultaneously the second, seventh and twelfth little stars, while Maudie herself held the hasp of the ring firmly in her left hand.

In an instant the engraved cover flew high in the air, and in the cavity was disclosed one large lustrous diamond. As if resenting its long concealment from the light of heaven, it shot out a circle of dazzling rays. It was of the purest water, flawless and without the slightest tinge that could mar its perfection. It was evidently a gem of great price.

"Upon my word and honor, Miss Stapleton," said the manager, "you are a fortunate young lady."

"Young lady!" cried the old Parsee, "Buddha has sent you some very bright sonshine! Is it not so?"

But Maudie had only one idea. Timorously she looked at the manager and asked him if it was worth the money she wanted. A short conversation followed, and when the Parsee gentleman understood exactly how matters stood, he gallantly said that the young lady ought not to lose her diamond of sunshine.

If she would leave it in the safe keeping of the bank, he would advance the exact sum she wanted, and she might redeem the jewel any time within twelve months on repaying the money with six per cent. interest.

And when the Directory had been duly consulted, a clerk from the bank was dispatched to Messrs. Shorte and Sharpe with a cheque payable at sight for five thousand six hundred and twenty-five dollars drawn by Hormuiz Ramashan on the Oriental Bank and accompanied by a note from the manager that it was in payment of the interest on mortgages due that day by Sir Robert Burnside, of Burnside Hall, Devon.

Then it was that Maudie flew to a telegraph office and sent her message of joy to her broken-hearted lover, and with a bounding heart and a beaming smile hurried back to Thomas' Hotel in time to sit down to the luncheon table.

* * * * * *

At last Sir Robert found courage to tear open his telegram. He had nerved himself for the worst. "I know it is all over with me," he said, "but I will bear it like a man." And this is what he read: "Be happy, darling, all is right; the money is paid. My ring has brought you sunshine at last.—Maudie."

TO STOP THE FUNERALS.—"You would be considerably surprised if you knew the number of letttters a coroner receives from anonymous correspondents in the course of twelve months," remarked a deputy coroner the other day.

"We get letters from all kinds of people, suggesting that this funeral and that funeral ought to be stopped, and an inquest held upon the body.

"In the majority of cases they are written merely out of spite by some persons who have grudges against the relations of the deceased persons, and think that if they can manage to have the funerals stopped that they will score heavily.

"Of course, this kind of thing causes endless annoyance and sorrow to the persons most directly concerned and also causes coroners a considerable amount of extra work, for the suggestions put forward in some letters are so plausible that we are obliged to make due inquiry; indeed, many a funeral has been stopped by these letters, although the suggestions have proved absolutely groundless.

"I can call to mind two or three such cases in my own district. I know one instance where a woman—it is generally a woman who does this contemptible thing, by the way—went to the trouble of writing four letters in disguised hands making the same suggestion, a very serious one, with the object of having the funeral stopped at the last moment.

"Unhappily she was successful; but when she was found out and it was made clear that she was the author of all four letters, and the suggestion was without basis, things were made very uncomfortable for her, and as she possessed some means, she was driven into paying heavily for her detestable conduct.

"Of course now and again coroners get really valuable hints from anonymous correspondents; but when anyone has to say anything he really believes, and has some evidence, he is generally honest enough to sign his name to it. So it should be in every case.

"He need not fear he will get into trouble if his suggestion is worthy of consideration: such matters would be treated with perfect confidence, and the signature would be a guarantee that petty spite played no part in the matter."

BORROWING TROUBLE.—Borrowing is poor business at the best; but of all the unsatisfactory "no return for your pains" occupations, the very worst in the world is borrowing trouble. To begin with, it is based on fancy, crankiness, undue nervousness, or the mental or moral idiosyncrasies that should have been trained out of the individual long before the years of childhood were passed. There are few people in the world more depressing and disheartening than those who are always seeing some shadow of coming evil. The world is sombre enough even at the best, and it is scarcely worth while to go out seeking for shadows or to conjure up purely imaginary ones.

Bric-a-Brac.

ALL BLUNTED.—All restaurant-knives in Austria Hungary are blunted according to law, to prevent the convivial revelers who who "use the house" from murdering one another when quarreling in their "cups." The law, though old, is apparently still considered necessary by the authorities, and is enforced in practice.

CAT AND DOG.—The instinctive fear which cats have of dogs is illustrated very amusingly by stroking a dog and then caressing a blind and new born kitten with the same hand that has touched the dog. At once the kitten will spit and fluff itself up in the most absurd way, distinguishing the smell of the beast which experience for thousands of generations has taught it most to dread.

AS TO "PUSS IN BOOTS."—No collection of fairy tales is complete without "Puss in Boots," and it is interesting to know that it has amused the children of a hundred generations. The various versions of the story differ materially, however. It is believed that the Zanzibar version is the original. There the man is ungrateful to the clever cat, and is punished by awaking to find his prosperity a dream. In France, Italy, and India, the cat is a swindler, and the Marquis of Carabas is his accomplice. In Russia and Sicily, "Puss in Boots" is a moral story, and the cat helps the man from motives of gratitude.

WEATHER SIGNS.—Domestic fowl look toward the sky before rain, and go to roost in the day-time. If they stand on one leg the weather will be cold. If birds are fat and sleek in February it is a sign of more cold weather. If geese walk east and fly west it will be cold. An old proverb says, "When the hen crows, expect a storm within and without," and hunters say that the direction the loon flies in the morning will be the direction of the wind the next day. Owls hooting in the day-time indicates rain, but if at night the weather will be fair. When the peacock loudly bawls, soon we'll have both rain and squalls.

AN OLD SONG.—The tune to which "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow" or "We Won't Go Home Till Morning" is sung was once a national air in France. In "Marlbrouck" the death and burial of Queen Anne's great captain are burlesqued. The song is supposed to have come down from the Walloon country, and it was unknown in the French capital until fifty years after Marlborough's death, when a Picardy peasant woman, coming up to Versailles to nurse the baby dauphin, brought it with her, and sang her little baby charge to sleep with the old jingling rhyme. From this "Marlbrouck" became popular in Paris, and ultimately it spread abroad.

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AT LIFE'S THRESHOLD.

BY E. R.

What does the baby think of
When he smiles so in his sleep?
Of the land he so lately came from,
Where the dwellers never weep?
Of the songs that are always ringing
In the land where the angels are—
The land that to him, in manhood,
May seem so vague and far?

I fear for the future, baby,
And what it may bring to you:
So easy is it to falter—
So hard is it to be true.
I pray, as I bend above you,
That you never may forget
The pure white thoughts of Heaven
That linger with you yet.

Dear angel, whose loving whisper
He hears in dreams to-night,
Watch over this child, and help him
To keep his pure soul white.
Walk ever beside his pathway,
Until God calls him home,
And lead him back to the Heaven
From which he has lately come.

WON AT LAST.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A TERRIBLE PENALTY," "HIS DEAREST SIN," "MISS FORRESTER'S LAND STEWARD," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—(CONTINUED).

HE groaned and turned aside, that she might not see the agony on his face.

"It would not help me!" he said, almost brusquely; for it was difficult for him to speak. "It would not help me at all. And if it would, I could not let you do it! There—there is enough evidence without yours——" He stopped, for she had shuddered, and her face had grown even paler.

"Do you mean? Ah, no, no! They could not! God would not let them find you guilty! He could not, could not!"

She began to tremble. With an effort she mastered her emotion, and was calm again.

"Something will be discovered," she said, struggling to steady her voice. "It must be! The person who—who is guilty will be found."

"Yes; yes!" he said, with an assumption of confidence. "No doubt he will be. The—the police are clever, and——"

"Are you only saying it to give me courage?" she asked, scanning his face anxiously.

He forced a smile.

"We will hope for the best," he said. "My lawyers will do their utmost on my behalf. You have been—very ill——?" He broke off abruptly, and with an infinite remorse and grief in his voice.

"Yes; I have been ill," she said. "But I am quite well and strong now. It—if I could only be sure you were safe!"

"Do not think of me!" he said, quickly. "But if you must, remember that you cannot help me; that if you were dragged into the business it would only increase my unhappiness."

"You think of me—always of me! Not of yourself!" she said, almost to herself. "Never of yourself!"

"Do I not?" he said, bitterly. "When have I not thought of myself and my selfish desires?"

She looked at him with a wistful tenderness.

"Shall I tell you? When you strove to make the poor people at Lealmore happier and more contented; when you—you went away lest—lest you should say to me what you said that night. When you gave up your place in the boat to another man. Ah, yes! I have heard it all; and—and—my heart has swelled with pride! And that is not all. You were not thinking of yourself when you sent the money to save father and Bobby—and me!"

Gaunt reddened, and bit his lip.

"You know? Who told you?"

"No one!" she said "But do you think I could not guess?"

He looked aside for a moment. Then he said, with sad bitterness:

"And now, I suppose, you will refuse it—refuse anything, ever so small a thing from my hands?"

"No," she said, simply. "I will not. I know that—that it would pain you. I wanted to refuse, until—until I thought it was all over; then I saw that it would be wrong to do so. It would have been as if—as if I had refused to—to forgive you."

He stretched out his hand.

"Bless you, Decima!" he said, in a broken voice. "You have found the way to ease my heart of its load!"

"I know!" she said, as simply as before. "Some day we shall pay it back. Aunt Pauline—— But I will not let you think me ungrateful and churlish."

He could not speak for a moment; the exquisite sweetness of her reasoning overcame him as nothing else could have done.

"There is no one like you!" he said, at last, with a kind of reverential despair. "No one! Ah; how could I help loving you? Ah, forgive me!" for she had winced and shrank back—slightly enough, but he had perceived it. "Forgive me!"

There was a world of grief and remorse in his voice, in his face. For he felt at that moment that, though the old barrier had been removed, his conduct had raised a new one. He loved her still, and she might love him still, but the gulf yawned between them; and he himself had dug it!

Lady Pauline came to the door. She inclined her head to Gaunt, but addressed Decima:

"Are you ready, Decima? The time has expired."

"Yes, aunt," said Decima, in a low voice, and with a sigh.

Lady Pauline regarded Gaunt gravely. Even she could not help pitying the misery which his face revealed.

Gaunt fought for his voice.

"I have to thank Miss Deane for coming here, Lady Pauline," he said, as steadily as he could. "I have assured her that she cannot help me by—by appearing in Court; that I most earnestly entreat her not to do so!"

Lady Pauline inclined her head again.

"My niece has only done her duty in coming to you, Lord Gaunt," she said, in even tones, "a duty which I could not refuse to recognize."

He bowed, with his old courteousness.

"Knowing all——" he paused.

"Yes," she said. "My niece has told me everything."

"You will not need any assurance of my remorse; will not doubt my assertion that there is nothing I would not do or suffer to spare her a moment's unhappiness—discomfort?"

Lady Pauline regarded him solemnly.

"I believe in the sincerity of your desire to spare her, Lord Gaunt," she said, "but it is part of our punishment that we are helpless to avert the consequences of our misdeeds from falling upon those who are innocent, and whom we would most desire to shield."

"That is so," said Gaunt, simply; and the commonplace assent was more eloquent of his pain and misery than a more ornate response would have been.

"Aunt!" murmured Decima, appealingly.

"We will go," said Lady Pauline. "It is only fair and just that I should assure you of my conviction of your innocence of the awful crime laid to your charge, Lord Gaunt," she added.

Gaunt inclined his head.

"Thank you, Lady Pauline. Yes, I am innocent of that!" he said, quietly.

Lady Pauline went outside again, and Decima, who had been standing with an expression of pain in her lowered eyes, raised them to Gaunt's face.

"Good-bye!" she said, in a low voice. She did not hold out her hand; and that she did not do so hurt him. He did not know that she dared not run the risk of touching him!

"Good-bye! Heaven bless and keep you!" he said, almost in a whisper.

Her eyes rested upon his with an infinite sadness and infinite tenderness; then she drew them away, slowly, slowly, and, with a sigh, left the cell.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

WHEN Decima had left the cell, taking all the light and warmth with her, as it seemed to Gaunt, he sat on the bed with his face in his hands, thinking of every word she had said, recalling the sweet face, with its new expression of sadness and resignation.

He asked himself why Fate had sent him across her path, why Heaven permitted one of its angels to suffer as she had suffered, simply through loving him.

Alas! This kind of question is not only futile, but recoils upon the questioner. Why the innocent should suffer with the guilty; why the woman should suffer through her love for the man, are interrogations which remain unanswered, even by theologians, who are supposed to know everything.

Gaunt was so engrossed in thinking of Decima, that he could scarcely turn his attention to his own affairs, though, in all truth, they were grave and serious enough.

Mr. Pelford brought Sir James, the great counsel, the next morning, and they went over the whole story, and examined the evidence with a minuteness which wearied Gaunt. Perhaps he permitted this weariness to be seen, for Sir James got rather sharp.

"Look here, Lord Gaunt," he said, impressively, and no man could be more impressive than Sir James, when he liked, "I'm afraid you don't realize your position."

"That's what I say!" exclaimed Mr. Pelford, aggrievedly.

"The evidence is very strong. The trial will take place in about three weeks. Unless we can discover the criminal, the perpetrator of this murder, I—well I should not like to answer for the result. Of course, I could have the trial put off."

"Pray do not!" said Gaunt. "Three weeks of suspense will be quite long enough. If you do not discover him in that time, he will remain undiscovered. I can give you no assistance beyond that which may be supplied by my plain statement of what occurred on the night I met my wife.

"Please don't think me indifferent or ungrateful for the efforts you are making on my behalf. I have no desire to figure as the first Gaunt who has been hanged, I assure you; but I feel quite helpless when I am in that condition!" He made a little weary gesture with his hand.

Sir James shrugged his shoulders.

"We will do all we can. We must find out all that is possible to be discovered concerning the unhappy lady's movements since she parted from you. You know no details of her life of late, I suppose?"

"Absolutely nothing," said Gaunt, "excepting that she was living with her brother."

"We will send over to Monte Carlo," said Mr. Pelford. "We will get all the information we can out of him; but we will not bring him over till the last moment; for the man makes a nuisance of himself."

Then they went, and Sir James used strong language, outside the prison.

A little later, Gaunt had a visit from Bobby; and Gaunt was glad to see him, at any rate.

"Your sister has gone home?" he asked, anxiously.

"Yes," replied Bobby.

"It was good of her to come," said Gaunt; "but you must not let her come again. This is not a fit place for her. You will take care of her, Bobby?" he added in a low voice, and turning his head away.

"Aunt Pauline will do that," said Bobby. "I can't leave town till after—after the trial. I want to see you every day. I'm wretched when I'm not here!"

Gaunt put his hand upon the boy's shoulder.

"You are indeed that 'friend in need,' Bobby," he said.

Bobby's eyes grew moist.

"Is there nothing, nothing I can do for you?"

Gaunt shook his head. Then he said, as if he were glad to find something:

"Yes! The night I arrived in London, I met a man, a fellow passenger on the unlucky Pevensey Castle. The poor fellow was in a wretched plight, and I took him to the hotel with me.

"He seemed fearfully ill—seriously ill, I should say, but he left the hotel the next morning before breakfast. I don't like the man, but I feel a strange kind of interest in him; and I wish you'd go down to the hotel and see whether he has turned up again."

Only too glad for something to do, Bobby went off to Morlet's. He came back with the information that nothing more had been seen of Mr. Jackson. He had paid his bill before leaving, and had not returned to the hotel.

"I'm almost glad to get rid of him," said Gaunt; "but I hope no harm has come to him. He was dreadfully ill."

"It is the man you rescued, isn't it?" asked Bobby.

"You can scarcely call it that," said Gaunt; "he took his chance in the boat with the rest."

"You gave up your place to him," faltered Bobby.

"Willingly enough!" remarked Gaunt, indifferently.

"I'm going off now, to help Pelford," said Bobby, as he took his leave. "We're going to leave no stone unturned. We must find the guilty man!"

"And you will, I am sure, if he is to be found!" said Gaunt, gratefully.

The days dragged on slowly and wearily. Gaunt suffered, of course; but it may be truthfully said that his sufferings were light compared to those of Decima.

She was down at Lealmore, where everything reminded her of the man whose life was in peril. Never, at any time since their first meeting, had she loved him more deeply and devotedly than now.

Lady Pauline had told her that she must crush this love from her bosom; and she tried to do so; but it is not when the object of a woman's devotion is in mortal peril that she can harden her heart against him.

Decima bore herself bravely; she uttered no moan. She tried to look and to speak cheerfully; she performed her household duties, and went about the village as of old, and as if there were no weight crushing down upon her heart. But every time she went out, she saw something that recalled him to her, and the people unconsciously stabbed her by references to "the case," and Lord Gaunt's probable fate.

Mr. Bright was amazed at her courage; for he seldom met her without breaking down.

It was only in the solitude of her own room that Decima gave way to her grief and her love. Perhaps no one but Lady Pauline suspected that the girl who came down to breakfast punctually and quietly each morning had spent the night in tears and prayer.

As the day for the trial approached, Decima spent more of her time in her own room; and Lady Pauline began to dread that the girl would break down. But the determination to appear at the trial and help Lord Gaunt, if it were possible for her to help him, supported Decima.

The day of the trial arrived. The Court was crowded, not only with the general public, but with many distinguished persons, for the interest in the case had revived and become intensified by the added romance of the shipwreck and Lord Gaunt's heroic conduct.

The public is as fickle as the wind. It had all along regarded Lord Gaunt as guilty, and at first had been deeply incensed against him; the public always is when the wrong-doer happens to be a person of rank.

But, although Lord Gaunt was still deemed guilty, popular feeling had swung round. After all, the unhappy woman had been a "bad lot." And then, again, she had been Lord Gaunt's wife; and, with Englishmen, there still lingers a trace of the old feeling—though they would not admit it—that a man has a right to do what he chooses with his wife.

And, then, the story of Gaunt's unselfish conduct on board the Pevensey Castle had touched the public in its tenderest part—its sentiment.

It argued that a man who could so cheerfully risk his life for his fellow men, ought certainly not to be hanged—though it should be proved that he did kill his wife in a fit of passion.

So the Court was crammed, and the sentiment which animated most of those present was that of sympathy with the accused; and the feeling grew much stronger when Lord Gaunt stepped into the dock.

Gaunt was a good-looking man, but he possessed that which is more valuable to a man than regularity of feature—that peculiar air which we call "distinguished," and which always impresses the individual or the crowd.

He was pale, of course, but he was perfectly calm, and, though grave, did not appear at all anxious.

Every eye was turned upon him, and he met the concentrated gaze—that gaze which fills most of us, even under the most favorable circumstances, with nervous terror.

Gaunt met it quite steadily. Only for one moment did his eyes falter and the expression of his face change; it was when his eyes rested upon the sweet pale face of the girl who, clad in Quakerish simplicity, sat beside Lady Pauline in an inconspicuous part of the Court.

Decima met his glance, saw the color rise to his face, then leave it again; saw his lips twitch as if with a sudden pang of pain; and her own eyes filled with unshed tears, and her lips quiver. He turned away instantly, as if he could not bear to see her; and she understood.

The venerable judge on the bench had been a friend of Lord Gaunt's father; amongst the titled and distinguished people present were many who knew Gaunt personally; all of them knew him by repute, as a famous traveler, and a man absolutely without fear. The women sighed as they looked at him; the men exchanged glances of pity.

"Marriages are made in heaven! Oh, are they?" remarked one man to another. "Just look at that chap! I suppose there isn't a better fellow in the

world than Gaunt. I was at Eton with him, and I've known him all my life. He's as straight as a dart, and got the pluck of Satan.

"He wouldn't hurt a fly, in cold blood, and he thinks nothing of risking his life for some bounder on board the same ship.

"And yet that fellow's whole life is made miserable because he stood up before a parson for ten or twelve minutes, and remarked that he took a certain woman for his wife. Not only is his whole life made miserable, but he's going to be scragged because, driven pretty mad, I daresay, by the woman, he puts an end to her!"

"Yes," assented his friend. "Matrimony is the very deuce. But the 'New Woman' is going to abolish it, isn't she? If so, I shall vote for her all the time. I suppose there's no doubt about Gaunt's having done this?"

The other man shook his head.

"I'm afraid not," he said.

And it was the general opinion.

The Attorney-General rose to open the case for the Crown. There is no need to trouble the reader with a word of his speech, or an account of the witnesses and the evidence; for nothing new, nothing that had not already been proved at the inquest, was advanced.

The Attorney-General was neither bitter nor vindictive; but his speech was, necessarily, a strong argument for the conviction of the prisoner, and all who heard it, even before the witnesses were put in the box, felt that the case was very black against Gaunt; and, as the evidence was skilfully marshaled by the prosecution, everyone in Court was convinced that unless Sir James, the counsel for the prisoner, was in possession of some very strong evidence to meet that of the prosecution, the verdict would be one of "Guilty."

The interest, keen enough at starting, increased as the trial proceeded: women grew pale, men frowned and leant their heads upon their hands, or folded their arms and bit their lips, as they listened to the story of the chance meeting of husband and wife, and the murder of the latter.

Gaunt stood erect, with his hands resting lightly on the edge of the dock; or, now and again, he leant against the partition, with folded arms.

He was not indifferent as to the result of this wordy war between the legal gentlemen who were fighting for and against him: but he was thinking, not so much of the coming verdict, but of the white-faced girl who sat with tightly compressed lips and downcast eyes, which now and again she raised to his with a glance of infinite compassion and infinite sorrow.

The short day was drawing to a close, or rather, the light in the badly-windowed court was fading, when the case for the prosecution closed.

As the last witness left the box, the audience—for they resembled the audience in a theatre, in the closeness of their attention, and their eagerness to grasp every detail—the packed crowd drew a long breath.

Just below the dock stood a little group of Gaunt's friends. There were Bobby, and Bright, and Mr. Lang. They all turned and looked up at Gaunt with a smile which they endeavored to make encouraging; but Gaunt saw, behind the smile, their anxiety and apprehension. The Attorney-General and Mr. Boskett, between them, aided by the evidence, had, for the present, convinced the jury of the prisoner's guilt.

Sir James rose, with his well-known air of quiet assurance and complete confidence in his client's innocence; and he spoke as if no man in his senses, certainly not the twelve intelligent gentlemen in the jury-box, could for one moment be induced to believe that such a man as Lord Gaunt could be guilty of so cowardly a crime as the murder of a defenceless woman—even though that woman were his wife.

It was a magnificent speech, and it brought the tears to the eyes of many of the listeners. But, though the jury might feel inclined to weep at the eloquent description of Lord Gaunt's ruined life, wrecked by his unfortunate marriage, Sir James' speech had not, they felt, disposed of the evidence against the prisoner.

Sir James called witness after witness, and they one and all testified to the noble character of the prisoner, and declared their conviction that he was incapable of the crime with which he was charged. The evidence intensified the sympathy of the Court, but, alas! it did not prove Lord Gaunt's innocence.

Everything that could be proved in his favor was brought forward by Sir James; but how little it was, how small it appeared against the black mass of evidence which the Attorney-General had brought against the accused!

Two men, standing not very far from each other in a corner of the Court, felt as if the verdict had been already pronounced, and both their faces flushed with the anticipation of vindictive satisfaction.

Both Mershon and Morgan Thorpe were thirsting for that one word "Guilty!" and, as they glanced at the grave face of the foreman of the jury, they could almost fancy that the word, the fatal word, was already forming on his lips.

Gaunt himself was convinced that there was no hope. As the Attorney-General began his reply to the defence, Gaunt drew himself up, and gripped the edge of the dock firmly.

If Lady Pauline would only take Decima away!

As if she had heard his unuttered prayer, Lady Pauline at that moment said, in a low voice:

"Come away, now, Decima!"

But Decima shook her head, and her hands strained together still more closely in her lap.

What was it the Attorney-General was saying, "knocking," as one of the barristers whispered, "knocking with every word a fresh nail in the prisoner's coffin?"

"The evidence against the prisoner is overwhelming. The unhappy woman was stabbed in his rooms. She was found covered by his coat. The weapon with which the deed was done was his. No one else, no other man, entered that awful room that night."

At this point of his terrible eloquence he had paused: for there had come from the back of the Court a hoarse and derisive laugh.

The Attorney-General repeated the last words. "No other man entered that room that night!"

The laugh was repeated also.

The Attorney-General stopped, and looked round, indignantly: the usher cried "Silence!" The judge looked up sternly from his notes; some of the ladies laughed hysterically.

There was a confusion in the back of the Court, from which the strange sound had proceeded; a man's voice, thin and feeble, yet penetrating, came across the crowded room, as if he were addressing the judge.

The judge held up his hand.

"Silence?" he commanded; then, as the silence fell, he said, "What is the meaning of this disturbance? Bring that disorderly person forward."

A policeman, drawing a man with him, pushed his way through the crowd. The man was pale and emaciated, and the effect of his pallor was increased by his red hair and bloodshot eyes.

"Trevor!" exclaimed Thorpe, under his breath.

"Jackson!" thought Gaunt. "Has he gone mad? What will they do with the poor fellow?"

But if Jackson were mad he concealed his insanity with admirable art. Of all present he was the most calm, saving, perhaps, the judge and the prisoner.

"Why have you made this disturbance?" asked the judge, sternly.

Trevor looked up at the bench, and then round the Court.

"I laughed!" he said. His tone was respectful enough, but it was suggestive of a kind of sullen contempt. He was breathing painfully, and his head was thrust forward, as if he were too weak to stand upright.

"I laughed at the Attorney-General's speech," he continued. "He said no other man besides Lord Gaunt went into the room that night; and I happen to know that one did."

Sir James rose quickly, and turned to Mr. Pelford.

"Who is it?" he demanded.

Mr. Pelford shook his head.

"I cannot tell you!" he replied, with agitation.

The judge held up his hand to still the murmur which had arisen.

"Do you offer yourself as a witness?" he asked.

Trevor nodded, and coughed. He was got into the witness box, amidst intense excitement.

The Attorney-General rose.

"My lord, I need scarcely say that I am quite ignorant—that I know nothing of this person, or the evidence he is about to give!"

Sir James rose.

"My lord," he began, in anything but his usual self-possessed manner, "I am as ignorant of this person and his evidence as my learned friend; but my client, the prisoner at the bar, is desirous that the truth, and all the truth, shall be told respecting this terrible tragedy."

There was a murmur of applause, which was instantly suppressed.

"I myself will examine the witness," said the judge. "But perhaps it will be still better that we should permit him to make his own statement."

The two eminent counsel bowed in concurrence.

Trevor leant against the witness box, his eyes fixed on the Royal arms, just above the judge's head. His face wore an expression of sullen, almost stolid, resignation.

As he had entered the box, he had glanced at Gaunt, but had glanced only, and had not looked toward the dock again; he seemed utterly indifferent to everything, the crowded court, the excited faces; the majesty of the Law, represented by the stern faced judge; utterly indifferent to everything around him.

"You say," said the judge, "that a man, other than the prisoner, entered his rooms at Prince's Mansions the night of the murder. Tell us what you know of the case; and, remember, that you are upon your oath."

Trevor leaned over the edge of the box.

"I say that a man entered Lord Gaunt's rooms that night. He called at the house in Cardigan Terrace and inquired for Mrs. Dalton."

A fit of coughing checked him for a time; when he had recovered from it he resumed, with difficulty, and still more hoarsely. "The man was told that Mrs. Dalton was confined to her room with a headache. He was turning the corner of the street, when he saw her leave the house and get into a cab. He wanted to know where she was going; he called another cab and followed her——"

The Attorney-General rose. He was going to say that this was not evidence; but the judge held up his hand, and Mr. Attorney-General resumed his seat.

Trevor had not glanced at him, but waited stolidly until the judge signed to him to go on.

"He saw her go into Prince's Mansions. He thought she had gone to visit a man who lived there—a man he knew. He went into a public house and got a drink—several—then he went down to the Mansions. He meant to ring the bell, but he found the door ajar, and he went in. There was no one in the corridor; he went into the drawing-room. Mrs. Dalton was there—alone."

At this point the excitement in the Court became so intense that a murmur arose which rendered the voice of the witness almost inaudible.

Heads were craned forward in his direction, every eye was fixed upon him. Trevor seemed utterly indifferent still.

"She was alone. The man and she had some talk. He loved her: he was jealous. A few nights before, she had promised to marry him. That night in Lord Gaunt's rooms, she laughed at the man; she told him that she was married already; had been married all the time, and had been fooling him.

"More than that, she had been helping her brother to rob him. The man went mad for a moment, and stabbed her!"

A cry escaped the crowded court. Decima's hands were stretched out towards Gaunt for an instant, then clasped on her bosom. Trevor was quite unmoved by the excitement surging around him; and he went on in a hollow and impassive voice:

"There was a foolish kind of a dagger lying on the ground near him, and he caught it up and stabbed her with it. She was dead in an instant: it must have gone straight into her heart. He laid her on the sofa, and covered her with a fur coat he found lying there. Then he left the rooms, and, by luck, no one saw him."

A fit of coughing seized him again at this point. He went on after a moment or two, holding his blood-stained handkerchief in his wasted and twitching hand.

"No one saw him, and he got away. No one would ever have suspected him, and an innocent man would have suffered. But certain things happened. The innocent man saved the real murderer's life. The cabman who drove him to the street in which the Mansions are is in Court." He glanced towards the end of the room.

"So is the barmaid who served him with the liquor. They have not come forward before because the cabman thought the case was clear against Lord Gaunt and didn't want to be troubled; and the barmaid—well, she has no reason to connect the man with the case." He paused, struggling for breath. Sir James rose. He was very pale, and his usually firm voice shook during the first few words.

"All through this statement you have spoken of 'the man.' You have charged someone with the murder of Lady Gaunt. I ask you the name of the man you thus charge!"

Trevor put his handkerchief to his mouth, and wiped his blood-stained lips.

"Ralph Trevor," he said, in a hollow voice. "I am the man."

No one who was present in Court has ever been able to give a clear and connected account of what followed; though everyone had a confused impression of seeing and hearing several witnesses in the box after Trevor had been carried out.

But the impression is blurred by that which followed, when the jury, without leaving their seats, returned a verdict of "Not Guilty!" and the judge, in a few faltering words of sympathy, pronounced Lord Gaunt a free man.

The officials found it utterly impossible to check the roar of applause with which the crowd received the verdict and the judge's expression of sympathy; and Gaunt found himself carried, swept as it were, into the open air; a free man, indeed!

* * * * * *

Eighteen months after the acquittal of Lord Gaunt, and the death of Ralph Trevor—he died in prison within a week of the trial—there was a garden party at Lady Roborough's.

It must be confessed that the usual garden party is a deadly, dull affair—who has not suffered at it?—but Lady Roborough's was an exception to the dreary rule.

As has been intimated, she was a clever, old lady, far too clever and good-natured to get together a mob of people and permit them to bore themselves to death through the hottest and most trying part of a summer's day.

At Roborough, you were sure to find plenty of shade—the gardens were the pride of the country—and plenty of amusement.

There were four capital tennis courts, for instance, a wonderful bowling green, a lake with boats, tents with an unlimited supply of tea, ices and more solid refreshments, a first-rate band, not too loud, in the open air; subterranean shelter—drawing-room, if the day should be wet—as it sometimes is in England—and there were shrubberies and shady walks in which one could flirt or smoke the surreptitious cigarette in safety.

People came from far and wide to these garden parties, and, marvellous to state, were always sorry when the time came for them to go, and the butler to collect and check the plate and spoons.

Lady Roborough, looking scarcely a day older, moved about the grounds, applauding the tennis players, conniving at the flirting, cautioning the boating parties to "be careful," and seeing that no one went without the precious cup of tea.

Now and again, she persuaded herself to take a rest, and, seated just inside the big marquee, from whence, like a general, she could survey her forces, she indulged in a little gossip with some of the older guests, who liked the shaded tents better than the tennis, the boats, or even the shrubberies.

"A great success, as usual, my dear," remarked Lady Ferndale, who sat next her.

"Everybody seems very happy; at any rate, they appear to be amusing themselves," admitted Lady Roborough. "The next best thing to being young is to be old enough to like to watch young people."

Lady Ferndale smiled.

"You must be enjoying yourself, then," she said, "for there are plenty here. How pretty some of the girls are! Do you think any of us were half so good-looking?"

"I can answer for one, my dear," responded Lady Roborough, touching her friend's arm affectionately. "But there are some very good-looking young people here this afternoon. If I were inclined to be vulgar—which, by the way, I very often am—I should say it was quite a 'Beauty Show!'"

"How awful!" exclaimed Lady Ferndale; but she laughed. "I wonder where that impressionable man, my husband, is. I have not seen him for the last hour. I suppose he is flirting with some of your pretty girls. Really, I am inclined to feel jealous!" She pretended to sigh, and Lady Roborough smiled.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

THE best judges of pleasure are the best judges of virtue.

A LAND AFAR.

There's a land of which we often dream
  In the hush of the twilight hours;
But afar o'er many an ocean stream
  Are its happy vales and bowers.
Its singing birds are a merry crew,
  And their songs are sweet and clear;
No shadows darken its skies of blue,
  And no winter is in its year.

Oh, happy it were to wander there,
  Where the fadeless roses blow;
Where the lilies sway in the scented air
  In their robes as white as snow;
Where no ruthless breeze strips the full-leaved trees
  In wood or in vale or grove;
Where the sunbeams play on the silvery seas
  That are calm as the skies above!

But, ah me! no crafts are anchored
  In its harbors safe and wide;
In its meadows broad, with verdure spread,
  But the misty phantoms glide.
For that land afar o'er the trackless main,
  Where the boughs are ever green,
That our storm-tossed barques may seek in vain,
  Is the Land of Might-Have-Been.

Some Violets.

BY E. M. K.

WHY old Peter Marston made a mystery of the girl we knew not, but a mystery she had been from the first. A mystery she remained, and the parish got so thoroughly accustomed to the fact that nobody gave it a second thought.

Peter was the village carpenter, a "solid" man, no longer dependent upon his business, though he superintended it with the utmost vigilance, and, like the centurion, having men under him. Nothing important was undertaken by any inhabitant, from hall to cottage, without consulting him, but he no longer worked anywhere but in his own shop. Everybody called him old Peter, and old he always had been—probably from his babyhood—old in face and figure and in thought and manner.

Miss Spark, the dressmaker, was intensely surprised when she was asked what she believed to be Peter's age and she had to reply five-and-forty.

At any rate he could not have been more than seven-and-twenty when he [illegible], but putting [illegible] and [illegible] back to those days, Miss Spark remembered that she then regarded him as a middle-aged man, years and years her senior. Peter had disappeared for the inside of a week, and returned bringing a three months' child with him.

Folks congregated at once to gaze on the new arrival, which was grudgingly exhibited, and found it an exceedingly lovely babe; exceedingly well dressed. Its soft woollens and fine linens were embroidered with richest silks, and it was altogether got up regardless of expense; which, to do Peter justice, it had been ever since, despite his reputation for closeness.

Everybody wanted to know who the child was and where it came from, and the answer that Peter vouchsafed was that "he had been three days' journey into the wilderness and found it under a juniper tree." Further questions only elicited the remark that it was nobody's business but his own.

He made it thoroughly his own business. The old woman who "did" for him was suffered to do very little indeed for the babe. Peter himself was its nurse, and later on its maid and its governess, and the child grew and flourished under his treatment.

So soon as little Esther could walk she toddled gaily along by Peter's side, steadying her quaint little body by the support of one of his big fingers, and all his workmen knew that he was gratified by their respectful treatment of the child. He worked amongst them diligently in those days, for his livelihood was then all yet to make.

Later on, Esther brought with her to the workshop her books and her slate, and there, amongst the far more interesting chips and shavings, she puzzled her way through the first gateways to knowledge, Peter assisting and correcting.

People laughed at old Peter and his foundling, but as they grew older the tender worship of the two for one another increased instead of diminishing. Esther learnt music from the village organist, French from the schoolmistress, polite arts of all kinds from Miss Spark, but they all agreed that there was something about that child that nobody could understand.

They might have made an exception in favor of Peter if they could have seen him and Esther sitting over their winter fire laughing merrily as they roasted nuts, or mulled their elder wine, or burnt paper to see parson and clerk die out one after the other.

There was a perfect understanding between them, and it was pretty enough to behold Peter's rough locks mingle in picturesque confusion with Esther's sunny curls.

At eighteen, Esther's love for Peter had not one whit abated, though she had been sent by the vicar's urgent advice for two years to a boarding school and had returned a finished young lady.

Money had not been spared in any way on this terrible business of separation—the school had been a very expensive one, and the principal had been requested to clothe Esther as the wealthiest of her pupils were dressed.

And Esther had been petted and caressed by the girls who raved over the interest of her history, of which they knew so very little, and doted upon her as a dear, romantic creature.

At eighteen she was a slim and graceful girl, with a far-away look in her lovely eyes, and a manner of appearing to dwell in another world than that of the Bussingfield people. Not that she was not keenly alive to all that went on in their homes and their daily work.

Nobody was found oftener at the bedside of old Esther Wilson, nobody was more warmly interested in the healing of Job Parson's hand, so badly cut by the reaper, nobody was busier in providing garments for Smith's motherless twins. Yet somehow everyone felt that Esther's soul took flights into some region where none could follow her.

She came of no common stock, the vicar said, and certainly she carried her head in no plebeian fashion. She held it graciously erect, and looked straight at you with deep serene eyes from under the shadow of her hat.

Her dress, generally of some soft and soft-colored woollen stuff, took folds of its own when she wore it, even if shaped by the none too skilful hand of Miss Spark, and she walked with the free movement of one who had no need to be conscious of her limbs.

Whatever she did was graceful and unconscious, and old Peter pretended not to hear his neighbors when they remarked that she was "every inch a lady."

He loved to have her about the home again, to find evidence of her dainty hand in all the appointments of the house, to see her seated as of old amongst the shavings while he made inspection of his workshop. He loved every touch of her hand, every sound of her deep and her low voice, and he began to tremble while he loved.

How could he expect to keep a creature like this shut up in the narrow world of Bussingfield? The life that was sufficient to him could hardly satisfy a fair young thing like her.

He remembered the time when it did not satisfy him; he remembered—still worse—the time when love came knocking at his gate to lure him away. What was to happen when love knocked at Esther's gate?

And every time he looked at her he felt that to a young man to see her must be to love her. He hated the sight of a stranger in the place; he dreaded the home-coming of the vicar's boys, but at present Esther's eyes had no secret that he might not read.

It was golden summer weather in that eighteenth year of Esther's, and there was a joyous bustle of coming and going amongst all holiday-makers.

Esther's late school companions wrote her glowing accounts of their sojourn by moor and sea and river, and more than one begged her to join her party, but to Esther fresh back at Bussingfield no other place had greater charms.

She read the letters aloud to Peter, and added for his enlightenment all that she could recall of former talks with her friends, finding matter for surprise in the carefulness of his inquisition.

Well as she knew her foster-father, she had no hint as yet of the present workings of his mind. She could not understand his persistent recurrence to the subject, nor his desire to discover if she was really satisfied to forego the offered gaieties.

But Esther wandered serene and calm through the lovely rose-hung lanes and by the little river scented with herb and meadow sweet, doubly content when Peter wandered with her, and her days glided on "like the swell of some sweet tune."

There was ripe corn in the fields, and the air thrilled with the musical harshness of the mower whetting his scythe before the shadow that Peter feared began to take form in his sight.

It was not the vicar's boys that troubled him; they had come, and Esther had smiled on them as playmates, now:se disturbed by them in thought or deed.

A stranger had come, a young man of a presence that approved itself even to Peter, and who, as he took his weekly place in the village choir, seemed to the anxious foster-father to form a very fitting pair with the graceful girl by whom he sat.

Alas, for Peter! he found upon inquiry that Patrick Frewer had come to stay. He appeared as tutor to the Squire's son, and would be seldom elsewhere than at the Hall, until the youth was launched upon his college life.

Once more Peter returned to the question of Esther's acceptance of her comrades' invitations, feverishly anxious to send her away from the danger he perceived, even if it were to encounter other dangers in the great unknown.

Once more Esther declared herself happiest at home, and as he still urged his desire that she should be in no way tied to him and his lonely ways, she walked beside him with face averted and fingers that clutched one another. Suddenly she turned upon him.

"Why do you say this to me?" she cried tremulously, and with the color coming and going in her delicate face. "Oh, father, father! Why will you not let me be happy for this last summer? There is trouble coming; trouble, trouble, trouble! I have seen it this long time. Do not send me away while still your life and mine are one!"

Peter turned, amazed at her pleading words, amazed still more at her quivering, pleading face.

"Child!" he said, and stood dumb through his rush of thoughts and fears. Esther clung to him and hid against his arm the eyes that saw more than she wished to see. "Child!" he repeated.

"Let it be so!" she cried. "Let me be your child; always and only your child. I do not want anything else."

She suffered Peter to soothe her, and the days went on.

They were the long harvest days with long bright moonlight evenings, warm and beautiful as summer, and Esther wandered by the fields and woodlands with her foster-father, drinking in large-eyed all the loveliness of this lovely world. The trouble that she had prophesied seemed as yet far off.

Then as harvest ended there were yet other rambles, for the vicar's daughter gathered together all who were willing to collect of the wealth of wood and hedgerow, for Thanksgiving decorations.

Esther was there, and Patrick Frewer too was there, and at the numberless practices of psalms and anthems they were still together.

It was October, the ripe nuts were rattling down through the dry leaves in the woods, and these woods were glowing in their last brilliant beauty before the storms should shake them bare, when Patrick Frewer came to Peter's door.

"I want a word with you, Marston," he said. "You may have expected—you cannot help having expected that every man who sees your lovely daughter——"

"What do you want with my daughter?" growled Peter.

"I love her," answered the young man confusedly. "I came—in fact, I came to ask you who were her parents? If her father——"

"Have you said that to her?" was the fierce response. "Have you told her that you can't marry her unless she comes along with a certificate of respectability in her hand? She's my daughter, and she's herself—is not that enough for you?"

"I have not said anything to her," returned Patrick nettled at the old man's attack; "and I do not see why you should take such offence at what I have said to you. Has not every man a right to discover what sort of relations a girl has before he marries her?"

"Certainly, if he can. You won't get your information here," quoth Peter, and shut the door in the questioner's face.

Then as he turned, still chafing with offence, he saw Esther, white and still, gazing open-eyed at him. Something in her look struck him through to the soul; he knew that she had heard the whole of the brief colloquy and he knew further that he had cut her to the heart.

She said nothing, there was not reproach even in her look, she came up to lift her lips to his, and moved away to prepare the table for supper.

She was quiet that evening, quiet when she came down that morning, but she asked no questions, made no complaint, was the same in her attendance upon his wants and wishes, the same in all her tokens of affections.

"Good-bye, child," he said, as he left the house to inspect some work going on at the school.

"I am your child, father? Always your child?" she answered back half in question, and he kissed her passionately before he turned away.

And the matter was dismissed between them. Whatever either might have thought on the subject, neither spoke. Nor did Patrick Frewer come again.

He took his accustomed place by Esther in the choir on the following Sunday, but she cast no look on him and there was no change in the pallor of her countenance, and he did not put himself to the perilous penance again.

The Squire coming to a knowledge of the matter visited Peter in the character of intercessor, but the obstinate carpenter vouchsafed no further information than that Esther's birth was as good as the Squire's own.

Winter came with long dark evenings, and Esther and Peter were much alone together. Peter had always been a silent man and Esther had always been quiet in her words and motions; they were silent and quiet still.

Sometimes for an hour or more she would sit on a stool by his side nestling up against him, and they both knew without a spoken word that the bond of love between them was unbroken as ever.

Patrick Frewer was away and Peter thought bitter scorn of the man who had so lightly given up all hope of winning such a maiden as Esther.

It had not been so with Peter in his youth; no marvel it Esther bore calmly the loss of a lover who cared only for her "respectability." He watched her narrowly to note if her health failed, but she gave no sign of breaking down, and if there was a strange look in her eyes they yet met his without blenching.

It was a damp and dreary winter, and the distance was mysterious with thick vapor even when the mists did not roll up strange and threatening from the near meadows.

What Esther saw in the mists no one knew, but she would gaze on them long and earnestly and turn away with eyes as misty as the meadows.

One January night, in the very dead of night, Peter heard a light step enter his room and Esther stood by his bed.

Her bright hair coiled carelessly on her head gleamed in saintly fashion in the light of the candle that she carried, her face and eyes wore a rapt, exalted look, the white cashmere dressing-gown that she wore made her appear more spirit than mortal. She put down her candle and held her small hands out to him.

"Father, he is calling me! He wants me! Let me go to him!"

"Who wants you? Who calls? Child, are you out of your mind?" cried Peter, starting up in alarm.

"Oh, no!" she answered, falling on her knees and looking up to him with weeping eyes. "My father wants me. He is ill and alone. Oh, father, tell me who he is and where he is, and take me to him! Will you not take me to him?"

"Who told you of him? What do you know of him?" asked Peter roughly. "How do you know that he is ill, or that he is alive?"

"Have I not always known? Known when he did not need me, and now when he does need me? Father, have you not always loved me? Do you not love me now? Will you not pity me and take me to him?"

There was a long silence. Esther had no more to urge, she knew she had no need to urge him further. Peter was battling with his own jealous heart and with the eerie feeling produced by Esther's words.

Peter stirred at last.

"You know I will do whatever you bid me, child. I will find out where he is and take you there. If he does not acknowledge you——"

Esther slipped her arms about his neck and laid her soft lips to his.

"Father! My father always by love, whatever he may be by right!" she murmured tenderly.

There were dark days at Bussingfield while Esther was away, tending the sick bed of her lawful father.

Captain Heron lay sick to death, alone and helpless, with neither wife nor kin to smooth his dying pillow, too weak to question anything that the carpenter told him or to dispute any of his conditions.

Esther's sweet face called back the one that he had loved and lost so long and long ago, and he welcomed her gladly, lovingly, thankfully.

To the household she was his niece, to him she was the love of his youth come

back in living form. For weeks, the last weeks of his life, they were all in all to one another, for Esther's heart overflowed with tenderness, for one so helpless, so dependent, so full of love and gratitude.

He laid the whole of his life, the whole of his heart bare before her eyes; all that he had ever done of right or wrong, of courage or cowardice, he told to this fair daughter; the wrong, the wholly unconscious wrong that he had done to her, he would fain have repaired, but his promise to Peter Marston and his own utter weakness stood in the way of that.

She wrote all his letters for him, and amongst them she wrote one day a summons to his heir to wait upon him. The heir was a distant cousin and she heard his name with surprise.

He came in prompt and willing obedience to a dying man, and Esther received him and saw him go again as if he had been a stranger.

What passed between him and Captain Heron she did not know, but she saw that the interview brought peace and satisfaction to her father's last hours.

When he lay dead a strange stillness settled upon Esther's heart. The cord that had tugged upon it through all the days of her life till now was strained no longer; the inarticulate voices that had cried forever in her ear were stilled at last. Her love to Peter flowed forth now in one untroubled stream.

She waited for the funeral, not attending it but seeing it set forth from the house and marking how the heir showed in everything his reverence and respect for the dead man; then on the same day she set out for home.

Home was at Bussingfield, with Peter, her heart's father. What he had done and why he had done it, she knew not, but she knew that nothing could ever kill the love between them.

It was a precious home-coming to her. He met her at the station, silent and undemonstrative as his manner was; but when he had her in the house he took her face in her hands and kissed and kissed her, with all his heart on his lips.

"My daughter, my daughter!" he murmured again and again; and Esther's true eyes gave him back an answer. He could not make enough of her that night, could not keep hands and eyes from her, was not content save when he was touching her cheeks or her hair, and a hundred times she pressed her lips to his rough hands and face.

He asked no questions, but she told him in her low sweet voice all that he desired to learn, and on her side she asked no explanation of the riddle that had perplexed her all her days.

Some six weeks later Patrick Frewer stood again at the house door, and again Peter opened to him.

"I am not come wholly upon my own errand this time, Mr. Marston," said Frewer with graceful courtesy. "I have a duty to a dead man to discharge, and I trust you will give me a patient hearing."

With an aggravated air of patience Peter admitted him to the house and disposed himself to listen.

"You are aware that when I attended my late cousin's dying summons, I found the lady whom you call your daughter in attendance upon him. My cousin also claimed her as daughter, although I, in common with the rest of the world, looked upon him as an unmarried man. He told me that circumstances rendered it impossible for him to proclaim her his heir——"

"They did!" put in Peter fiercely.

"And he charged me to make over to her such an amount as he considered just."

"My daughter wants no man's money but mine!" cried Peter. "I have made enough and saved enough to give her as good a portion as any squire's daughter hereabout. You may keep your money to yourself!" The man was absolutely bristling with offence.

"I do not doubt that your daughter is amply provided for, and that you can place her beyond all need of help; but I think that neither you nor I, Mr. Marston, are cold-hearted enough to disregard a dead man's bidding. I have brought the necessary deeds down with me, and my lawyer will wait upon Miss ——"

"Marston," snapped Peter.

"Miss Marston, to-morrow. And now that I have discharged myself of that errand, I want to turn to the subject I spoke to you about before."

There was something shy and deprecating in Patrick's manner, and Peter smiled a grim little smile as he answered him.

"You want to ask the same question over again and make sure of the girl's respectability."

"No," said Patrick, coloring up: "I only want to ask one question and make sure of one thing—to ask your daughter to be my wife and make sure of 'Yes' by way of answer."

"What!" Peter shouted. "When you have just told me her father was not a married man?"

"I can't help it. All that is past my understanding; but I know what I want. Mr. Marston, promise not to stand in my way?"

"Good gracious!" quoth Peter in helpless dismay. He had made up his mind that Frewer was a man to be opposed and discountenanced and distrusted, and this sudden change of front altogether upset his calculations.

The man had given himself airs when he knew nothing of Esther's disadvantage, and now that he thought he had hit on a blot on her history he came forward with an unconditional proposal. Peter was irritably dismayed.

Patrick waited, partly following his opponent's train of thought.

"Well, sir," he said as Peter continued silence, "do you object to my seeing her?"

"Yes, I do object," answered Peter slowly. "I do object; but I suppose I can't help myself. And I won't have you think you are stooping to my daughter: I won't have you think you are giving her anything.

"Man! I tell you Captain Heron was her father, and she is lawful heiress to all he died possessed of, and what I tell you I'll prove. There!" he said, flinging down before him some papers that he had taken from the secretary.

"There's a copy of the Captain's marriage-lines and the certificate of the children's birth. The boy is dead, and the mother is dead, and the Captain is dead; but that is true, and you can go and prove it." He paused a minute and went on more calmly.

"Since you know so much you may as well hear the whole tale. Esther Earle was my cousin and a favorite of my mother's. She had her here every summer, because she was my age and because she was a Londoner and the fresh air was good for her.

"As soon as I was old enough to think about it I knew I had made a fool of myself over Esther, and she gave me a promise that I daresay she never meant to keep. When I was twenty-four I wanted to get married and she would not. She was a governess in London, and when I went up to see after her I found what was the matter.

"We had pretty strong words, and I don't doubt I was a fool. I made her swear that when she was married she should give the first child to me. What I wanted it for I don't know.

"And she was married. They did it in secret, because his father was living then, and he daren't let him know of such a match, and presently Heron—he was not a captain then—was ordered abroad and Esther was left behind. About six months later I got a wild letter from her saying the child was born and I must go to claim it.

"She was in trouble enough then. Heron could not send her enough to keep her, and she had not been able to earn anything for a long time; and then there had come twins.

"The girl was the eldest, and she was glad she was sworn to give up one. I found I was pretty well forced to stick to the bargain I had made in my anger. I took the child on condition that she never told the father of the birth of any but the boy—I mean I made that the condition of my sending her money to keep her and the boy alive.

"And presently the boy died, soon after his father came back to England, and after awhile she died too. They never had another child, and as old Mr. Heron was still living, I daresay the Captain would not have thanked me if I had taken him his daughter. Anyway, I did not mean to do it. She was mine, and I kept her, and it don't seem to have come to much good in the end."

"Upon my word!" spoke Patrick as he ended. "I don't know whether you are a hero or a scoundrel!"

"It don't matter much," said Peter. "It's all over now."

He went deliberately across to the kitchen door and called to Esther, who was visible by the primrose border in the back garden. Then he looked back to Frewer.

"She is coming to you. You can tell her if you like," he said, and took up his hat from the stand in the hall and went out.

Frewer stood by the window watching him as he went away down the lane. He began to understand something of the relations between Esther and this queer, passionate old man. He was gone long before Peter returned to the house, and he carried no answer with him.

When Peter came back it was with weary step and bent shoulders. He scarcely lifted his to Esther as she came to meet him.

There was no change in the sound of the dear voice or the touch of the dear hands as they clasped about his neck.

"Father!" she said; and then he took courage and looked into her eyes.

They too were unchanged. Nothing was broken between them, nothing ever would be broken, whether all the course of Peter's life had been right or wrong.

* * * * * * *

"I will not go to him unless you go too," Esther said on the morrow, when Peter spoke of Patrick Frewer's hopes. Then she went out to the meadow across the lane to seek for violets.

When Patrick came by the footpath, over the stile, and across the meadow, he saw her seated there, with grave, sweet eyes, gazing out straight before her from under the shelter of her broad hat.

All the place was scented with the breath of the purple blossoms that peered forth from among the leaves on the bank on which she sat, and some of the fragrant bowers lay in her lap.

She looked up as he stopped before her, and they gazed long and earnestly into each other's eyes. Neither spoke; but presently the shy color crept up over Esther's face, her head drooped, and taking some of the violets from her lap she offered them to him.

BENEATH THE SEA.—Some years ago, upon the coast of France, there occurred one of those romantic episodes that seem to belong to the realm of fiction. A vessel had foundered within sight of port—gone down with all her cargo.

Two divers were sent to report the cause of the disaster and the prospect of raising the goods.

One of these represented the insurance brokers, who had instituted the investigation, and the other the captain and owners of the vessel.

The brokers' man touched bottom first, and found himself on a bed of white sand. He was fortunate enough almost immediately to discover the wreck, and at once climbed the cargo upon which the vessel rested. Investigation showed him that there had been foul play, for an auger hole was plainly visible in the hull of the ship.

He had turned to point out his discovery to the other diver, who was now by his side, when he felt himself suddenly clutched by the waist and dragged down upon the sand.

Here his assailant murderously attempted to break the glass of his helmet, but the assailed man fought desperately for his life.

He firmly believed himself to be in the clutch of a madman, and for a few minutes the water was thick with sand that flew up round the combatants. In the end the first diver was worsted, and his assailant forced him to lose his hold upon his line.

Death seemed imminent, but the diver's wits did not forsake him. Finding that he was no match for his adversary, he fell back apparently swooned, and in this condition the other man prepared to leave him, cut off from communication with the upper world.

He gave the signal to be drawn up, but as he began to ascend the apparently swooned man sprang to his feet and clutched the rising man's legs with a firm grip, and the two were hauled to the surface together.

Then, indeed, the ready-witted diver fainted in earnest, and before he regained consciousness his enemy had escaped to land, and when captured was attempting to leave the country.

At the trial he explained the reason of his conduct. It was the old story of greed leading to unlawful deeds, and of the resulting danger inciting to fresh crime—an over-insured cargo, a scuttled ship, and then a frantic effort on the part of the ship owners to avoid disgrace and punishment by offering to the diver a share of the profits on condition that the discovery, sure to be made by his rival, should never be heard of above the surface.

EVERYTHING worth having involves the sacrifice of something less worthy; every choice made demands the relinquishment of something else; and he only is wise who, while choosing what is to him the most valuable, cheerfully resigns everything which is inconsistent with that. This is the best foundation for contentment and peace of mind, the best safeguard against disappointed hopes.

Scientific and Useful.

MUSICAL TYPE-WRITER.—A Michigan inventor has contrived a type-writer for musical composers, which, he claims, will greatly facilitate operators and secure very satisfactory results. The copy which it makes can be photographed and a plate reproduced for printing, which is said to be superior to plates made in the ordinary way.

SALT AND FRESH.—An Austrian engineer is reported to have discovered that if sea water is forced through the trunks of trees in the direction of the fibres, every particle of salt is extracted, and the water rendered fit for consumption by ships crews. The water must be forced through the wood at a heavy pressure, when it will first drip, and then run in fine streams from the other end of the trunk.

NEW BULLETS.—A new bullet has been invented by an officer of the Swiss Army, and it is stated that its effects at long range are even more deadly than those of the shots fired from the Lebel or Mauser rifles. The new projectile is shaped something like a goose quill, and with a small charge of powder it will travel about 1,400 yards, and penetrate a block of wood to the extent of nine feet. At longer range the penetrating power is still enormous, the ball having, we are informed, sufficient force to enter a block of wood, when fired from a distance of 6,000 yards or nearly four miles.

Farm and Garden.

HORSE'S FEET.—To prevent horses' feet from balling with snow, smear the soles of the feet and the inside of the shoes pretty freely with soft soap.

ADAMANTINE WOOD-PROTECTOR.—Melt in an iron vessel fifty parts of rosin, and stir in fifty parts of chalk, fifty parts of fine sand and six parts of linseed oil. When well mixed, add one part of copper oxide, and again carefully mix. Apply to the wood hot with a stiff brush.

PLANT-WATERING.—Watering is the most important operation in connection with plant growth. Plants grown in rooms are benefited by an immersion in water at the same temperature as the room for about ten minutes once a week. Water should never be given before needed, neither should plants be allowed to become really dry. Plants out of doors should be thoroughly soaked, not merely surface-watered. Rain-water is the best for all purposes. The best time for watering plants during summer is the evening, but in winter morning should be chosen for the work.

Thirty years ago a physician told me I would soon die of consumption. I was troubled with constant coughing. Twenty years ago I commenced to use Jayne's Expectorant, and whenever troubled with colds and hoarseness have used it freely ever since. It has never failed to bring relief—(Rev.) I. N. WILLIAMS, Tarentum, Allegheny Co., Pa., Jan. 16, 1882.

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On Flippancy.

No one will claim for flippancy that it is a great quality—a virtue to be sung in verse, or to be pointed out to the young man as an acquirement to be aimed at. Rather do serious-minded persons show a disposition to speak of it in terms of entire contempt, and give it no quarter; but we are inclined to think that some people who possess the power of resorting occasionally to flippancy, without being absorbed by it, are rather to be envied.

What the comic relief is to a stodgy melodrama, flippancy is to the serious business of life. It takes the mind off weightier matters, and gives breathing-time. It is like the convenient switch with which we can turn off the telephone if the bell persists in ringing when we desire to be quiet. It is one of the devices for disconnecting the mind for a brief period from all that is serious, and seeing nothing but life's jokes. We are well aware that, to make good this claim on behalf of flippancy, we shall be obliged to look only at its best phases, and perhaps stretch its usual significance a little; but we can think of no other term to cover our meaning—"levity," or "high spirits," or "irresponsibility" will not do. We will try to make "flippancy" fit.

One of the worst indictments that can be brought against flippancy is that it is infectious. Undeniably, it has a tendency so to reproduce itself that there is always a danger of a race or an epoch becoming victims to it. Like fire, it may be a useful servant but a very bad master. Constant dwelling on the serious side of life uses up a great deal of time and nervous energy. Flippancy is recreative in proportion as it checks this tendency and allows the work of recuperation to go on unhindered.

It is by no means uncommon to find flippancy and great seriousness in combination, so that a mind given to exhaustive work may carry within itself its own cure. Your ordinary easy-going man, who is not readily perturbed, who takes his pleasures and his pains pretty much as a matter of course, and knows little of elation or depression, is not often guilty of flippancy. Perhaps his dead-level state gives him more pleasure than mental leaps from one extreme to another give the more nervous man. Paradoxical as it may seem, flippancy often attacks the man of intensity—he who experiences most clearly life's tragedies can also most easily appreciate its comedies.

There are those too who, instead of keeping their flippancy for moments of recreation, make it rather their staple form of expression or disguise, keeping their seriousness in reserve. They are not incapable of being serious, but they require good cause before they become so. Why, they ask, are you to regard life seriously, and dull your spirits by a kind of perpetual earnestness? They try to answer the question practically by adopting a merry-hearted mood that sees humor in all things. They refuse to distress themselves without good cause shown. With them flippancy does not mean incapacity to think, but rather a determination not to run thought to waste or weariness.

Much uneducated, unguided thought eventually lands the thinker in an impasse much darker and more impenetrable than the one from which he sought to find a way out. Good as it is sometimes to take stock of ourselves, it is often very harmful to allow thought to wander in an uncontrolled way about ourselves, our achievements, or our destinies. That way morbidness lies. Persistent ill-formed speculation leads one more often than not into gloomy by-ways, which the speculator is apt to mistake for the true road. Seldom does it leave us in a more cheerful mood than it found us. We cannot think away life's glooms.

Under such conditions, shall we say that the man who chooses deliberately, or perhaps philosophically, to adopt a change to flippancy now and again is making a mistake? He gaily faces the mock-serious aspects of life—those that are not altogether cheerful, but seem capable of amendment—and smiles and laughs them aside. Yet he never so far forgets his seriousness as to fail to bring it into play when there is hope of gain from its exercise. Perhaps he is wiser than the incorrigibly serious man. Perhaps he reads life a little more truly, and recognizes more readily when he may smile and when he must be sober.

It hardly needs to be added that we make no defence of the flippancy which dominates some men and becomes their main purpose in life. We need not endeavor to make life more serious than it really is, to take away the checker of its light and shade; but we must not refuse to recognize its seriousness where it exists; we must not quarrel with either the light or the shade. "One truth discovered, one pang of regret at not being able to express it, is better than all the fluency of flippancy in the world." Flippancy concerns itself only with the poorer half of existence, and we must find in the more serious elements of life our fullest pleasures; but the flippancy on which, for want of a better word, we have laid most stress, the flippancy of manner and high spirits, does not shut us out from more solid taste and liking. It needs no advocacy, for it is scarcely a quantity to be deliberately cultivated; but it will admit of a partial defence.

Recently there has been a notable return in our popular literature to the brightness and joyousness which are, after all, the predominating feelings of the wholesome-minded man. A while ago it seemed as though the gloomy tragedy-mongers, the lovers of dark and awesome fates, were entering into possession of the whole region of current literature; but the craze is flickering out. It behooves every hopeful person who believes in the ultimate goodness of God's world to help on the movement which claims for laughter and rejoicing as true and pure a place in the economy of the universe as tears and doleful shakings of the head.

Let us accept frankly the truth that the good in us bubbles over quite naturally and harmlessly into laughter and frolic, and, on occasion, even into flippancy. Good taste will tell us when the surroundings of our lives or the lives of others make such effervescence out of place, and will warn us against forcing unnaturally the pace of gaiety; besides, we shall learn that the extreme of nimble spirits brings its own retribution, in the form of exhaustion and a growing complementary sadness. We advocate no such extreme, but only press the point that the light and airy phases of our moods are to be thankfully welcomed and enjoyed, and are not to be frowned upon as unworthy and misleading.

If any one imagines that his own personality can be developed apart from that of others, he makes a fatal error. In savage tribes there is much uniformity and monotony. No one has much to give or much to take; therefore life is on a low plane and progress is slow. But, as civilization increases, differences become more marked, special talents develop, special tastes arise and are gratified, special thoughts and ideas find a bracing atmosphere in which to live. The thing to notice is that, as these differences multiply, so both personality and social well-being are enhanced. Instead of variations drawing men asunder, the bonds which unite them are the more closely drawn.

PLEASANT thoughts and feelings of every kind that come to us are far too often buried in the oblivion of silence. The seed which, if planted in the hearts and lives of those around us, would bring forth rich harvests of happiness, is carelessly thrown away. Such impressions should be regarded as a kind of trust for all those who can participate in them. If we have any bright thought, any hopeful outlook, any joyful experience, any loving emotion, let us hasten to share and diffuse it. If any ray of sunshine has penetrated our hearts or lives, let us gladly shed it on the pathway of others.

THE lack of reverence which ruthlessly scorns the past, and the narrow short-sightedness which neglects all service for the future, have much in common. They are alike small and mean in their nature, petty and insignificant in their results. What should we be but for the past that we inherit; and, loaded as we are with its benefits, what is it but gross selfishness to give no thought to and plan no benefit for those who are to follow us?

THERE is a general congruity between the refinement of heart and mind and that of face and manner. The latter, when simple and sincere, is the natural outcome of the former. It is the purity of the refined gold shining upon the surface, in all its truth and beauty, with a brilliance which no artificial polish, however well simulated, can produce on baser metal.

No man does justice to himself, to his occupation, to his family, or to the community, who does not allow some scope for the nourishment of the various faculties which are not called forth by his daily occupation. To learn the limits of his own strength and to adapt his work accordingly is one of the chief means of his true and permanent prosperity.

THE best part of one's life is the performance of one's daily duties. All higher motives, ideas, conceptions, sentiments in a man's life are of little value if they do not strengthen him for the better discharge of the duties which devolve upon him in the ordinary affairs of life.

IT is a strong and an abiding faith in one's own ability to perform which overcomes difficulties that others think cannot be surmounted.

Correspondence.

C. C.—To detect woody fibre in paper, touch it with strong nitric acid. If wood fibre be present, the paper will be colored brown, especially on warming.

E. M.—The appellation "Flowery Kingdom" is a translation of the words "Hwa Kwoh," a name often given to China by its inhabitants, who consider themselves to be the most polished and civilized of all nations, as the epithet "hwa" (the flower) intimates.

D. M. J.—The phrase, "I feel badly," is correct, if the meaning you wish to convey is that the power of feeling is impaired, as happens in some cases of paralysis; it is wrong if you mean that you feel ill, weak, sorry or mortified. In the latter case you say, "I feel bad."

G. C.—To make fireproof paper, take a solution of alum and dip the paper into it; then throw it over a line to dry. This is suitable to all sorts of paper, whether plain or colored, as well as textile fabrics. Try a slip of paper in the flame of a candle, and if not sufficiently prepared, dip and try it a second time.

ETTIE.—The error consists in using a plural noun, "ways," in the place of a singular one, "way." You should say "only a little way," instead of "only a little ways." In such cases the word way means distance. When you say it is only a little way from one place to another, you mean it is only a little distance. You would not say it is only a little distances from your house to your friend's; but to say that would be exactly equivalent to saying it is only a little ways. The mistake of using ways for way in such cases is very commonly made even by educated people, in whom the habit has become so fixed as almost to defy correction.

R. G. S.—Peckniff is a character in Charles Dickens' novel, "Martin Chuzzlewit." He is described as "an architect and land surveyor," at Salisbury. He talks homilies even when intoxicated, prates about the beauty of charity and duty of forgiveness, but is altogether a canting humbug, and is ultimately so reduced in position that he becomes, the author tells us, "a drunken, begging, squalid, letter-writing man," out at elbows and almost shoeless. He was noted for a "sleek, smiling, crawling abomination of hypocrisy," and on this account in real life is used as the representative of a class of men of which, happily, there are comparatively few in the world.

G. W. B.—Cream of tartar exists naturally in grape juice, but being insoluble in alcohol, it is gradually deposited in the form of argol (crude tartar), as the sugar of the juice becomes converted into alcohol by fermentation. In the preparation of cream of tartar the argol is dissolved in hot water, to which charcoal or fine clay is added, to take up the coloring matter. By boiling and filtering, a clear, colorless solution is obtained from which, on cooling, the first-named substance separates as crystals. Some of the crystals form at the bottom; others as a crust on the top, like cream, whence the name—cream of tartar. In chemical composition it is the bitartrate of potash, and contains potash, water, and tartaric acid. It is readily soluble in hot water, but it takes sixty parts of cold water to dissolve one part of this substance.

LILY.—You inquire why wives take the surnames of their husbands. We think you need only reflect a little to find some good reasons; but we may tell you that the custom is a very old one, and obtained amongst the ancient Romans, whence we derived it. The wife of Pompey was distinguished from other Julias by the addition "of Pompey." Our married women only omit the word "of." In some foreign countries—notably in Switzerland—the case is reversed, and the man takes the wife's name, but in addition to, and following his own. Thus, the well-known Genevese historian, Merle (blackbird), married an Englishwoman of the Daubeney family, and styled himself Merle-D'Aubigne, having Frenchified the English name; and people unacquainted with this, have fallen into the error of calling his work D'Aubigne's "History of the Reformation."

L. C. D.—With the aid of fossils the earth's age, or geological time, is divided into the following eras: 1. Archæan; 2. Paleozoic; 3. Mesozoic, and 4. Cenozoic. These eras are subdivided into periods and ages in this manner: 1. Laurentian and Huronian periods. 2. Silurian period (age of invertebrate animals), Devonian period (age of fishes), and Carboniferous period (age of coal-plants). 3. Triassic, Jurassic, and Cretaceous plants, all included in the age of reptiles. 4. Tertiary (age of mammals), and Quartenary (age of man). The estimated thickness of the Archæan or Azoic stratified rocks is from 40,000 to 50,000 feet; that of the Paleozoic beds is estimated at about 40,000 feet; while the Mesozoic rocks are supposed to be from 20,000 to 30,000 feet in thickness; and the Tertiary and Quartenary rocks together are not less than 10,000. These amounts are the sum of the thickest deposits of several formations, and not the thickness observed in any particular place. The time required by geologists for the deposition of these strata, and the building up of the great continental masses of the earth, is to be reckoned by millions of years. Astronomers and physicists, however, now maintain that the age of the sun is about 20,000,000 of years, and this limit is adopted by geologists generally for the sake of convenience.

IN NOVEMBER.

BY M. E. S.

Oh, don't you miss the roses sweet
  That blossomed through the Summer hours,
The violets among the grass,
  The sunlight on the glowing flow'rs?
No, love of mine; for roses bloom
  For ever on your cheeks so fair,
Your eyes are dowy violets,
  And sunshine lingers in your hair.

The scented lilies all are dead,
  They lie beneath the drifting snow,
And wintry winds have fiercely torn
  The poppies' petals long ago.
I grieve not for the lilies fair—
  Your brow and throat are e'en more white.
Let scarlet poppies fade and fall—
  Your rosy lips are soft and bright.

The lark has ceased his joyous song
  That echoed over vale and hill;
The nightingale is far away,
  And e'en the blackbird's note is still.
I care not though the birds are hushed
  By wood or lake, by hill or dell;
Your voice is sweet as skylark's note,
  As rippling brook or silver bell!

Turned to Ashes.

BY K. M. H.

"I'M miserable—perfectly miserable! I wish I could get away somewhere and never be heard of or seen again!"

"But, Sylvia, you surely can't care for this man, who has treated you so outrageously. You, of all people——"

"Oh, of course, like all the rest, you think I'm absolutely heartless. I tell you—I did care—I do care—I never knew how much until he went away. I came down here to get out of it all. I couldn't bear the whispers and smiles that went round when I appeared, and the other girls watching to see how I took it. Everyone thought we were engaged; his going off like that made me a laughing stock to all my friends. Oh, I wish I had never been born."

She broke down completely and flung herself on a sofa, burying her face in the cushions. Nell Derwent looked at her with tears in her own eyes.

"A man who would behave like that is not worth caring about, Sylvia," she said.

"You wouldn't say that if you knew him!" with a half-angry sob.

"If I knew him, I would try and punish him somehow. I would revenge you, Sylvia; I would flirt with him, and make him fall in love with me and then—depart as he did."

"You would do nosuch thing, you dear little innocent," said Sylvia, emerging from her cushions. "You couldn't flirt to save your life, and he's a very fascinating man. You would fall in love with him yourself directly, and forget all about me."

"Sylvia, how can you say such things? You know I would do almost anything for you, and—oh, Archie, what a fright you gave me."

"Talking about your swains as usual?" said the young man, who had just strolled in at the open window. "Why, what's wrong with Sylvia?" as that young lady, conscious of presenting a somewhat disordered appearance, hastily departed.

"She's very unhappy, I'm afraid," answered Nell in a distressed tone. "I've been feeling quite anxious about her ever since she came down. She hasn't seemed a bit like herself."

"Don't you worry yourself about Sylvia's troubles. She's probably more out of temper than anything else. This is her fifth season and she hasn't succeeded in bagging an eligible yet, so she comes rushing down here and makes herself out a martyr to you. I know her little ways of old."

"What horrid things you say sometimes Archie," exclaimed his sister angrily. "I don't believe she's capable of behaving like that."

"All right, old girl, don't get mad. I don't want to insinuate anything against Sylvia if you're fond of her, but I've known her longer than you have, and all I say is, don't take her too seriously. She's just the sort of girl, if she feels a bit out of sorts, or if her dressmaker's bill is a little bigger than she likes to think about, to get regularly blue and think the whole world's against her. Probably her latest man has got tired of her a little too soon.

"She's dull, too—there's no one for her to flirt with in this house—all right, don't rush away, I've done, only you're most likely taking her griefs to heart a great deal more than she is herself. Look here, I want you to come out and tell Jones where to put those new flowerbeds. The work must be done, as we're off to Switzerland in a week, and there's no end to arrange. Put on your hat and come out, Nellie."

And Archie Derwent, who was devotedly fond of his little sister arrested her attempt at a dignified exit and carried her off to the garden.

Meanwhile, the subject of discussion stood before her looking-glass upstairs, wishing she had not made her eyes so red. She was a tall, dark, handsome girl, and her eyes were her great beauty.

"I can't imagine what came over me," she said to herself. "It isn't like me to break down and make a fool of myself in that way. But I really feel the better for it, and Nell is a dear sympathetic little thing. I'll just lie down and rest till tea time, as all this worry is making me look quite old. What could have made Jim go off in that sudden way, just when I was perfectly certain he was going to propose. He would have suited me so well. It's too annoying. By the way, I never told Nell his name. Perhaps it's just as well, and she didn't ask."

She flung herself down on the sofa and was soon lost in the depths of a French novel.

* * * * * *

A month later, a lady and gentleman were sitting on the terrace of an hotel, looking out over one of the loveliest of the Swiss lakes. The lady was the type of the fashionable young married woman in appearance, and was holding forth with great emphasis and vigor. Her companion wore a resigned, long-suffering expression, mingled with an amount of passive resistance, which suggested that it was not by any means the first time that he had been attached on the same subject.

"But really, Jim, you know you ought to marry. Here you are, nearly five-and-thirty if you're a day, no ties to speak of, plenty of money, a good position—and your worst enemy could not call you plain. Yet instead of settling down with some nice girl, you go flirting round with one after another, never meaning serious all the time. You haven't the shadow of an excuse for such conduct. I don't believe you really enjoy it either. A man gets tired of that sort of thing after about twelve years of it. Why don't you marry?"

"Nobody have would me," said the object of this tirade lazily.

"Now you're talking nonsense. You don't mean what you say. I never flatter you, but you know perfectly well that half the girls in your set would be only too glad to be given the chance. There was that pretty little Kitty Sale, you were running after her last season. She would make you a charming wife."

"So she would if all I wanted were a doll to sit still and smile and say yes or no when I spoke to her. I could have a mechanical toy made which would do that equally well—and be less expensive."

"Don't be cynical, Jim, it doesn't suit you. If you want a clever girl, there are any amount about. That Miss—Miss—I've forgotten her name, but she's taken no end of degrees and things," vaguely. "A tall, thin girl. I saw you with her at the Leytons' dance."

"Her genius wouldn't seem to have made much impression upon you if you don't remember her name. I know who you mean though, I had the—er—pleasure of waltzing with her twice. It was exactly like dancing with a triangle. I took her to sit out, and when she found that I didn't understand Anglo-Saxon and was misty on the subject of the Heptarchy, she hardly deigned to bestow another syllable upon me."

"I confess I hardly thought she was your style," laughed Mrs. Templeton, dropping her role of mentor for a minute, then returning to the assault with new vigor: "But there are lots of girls who are pretty and clever both——"

"Now look here, Alice, once for all, I'm perfectly sick of the conventional society girl, with her everlasting thought about theatres, dances and scandal, or racing and the last new novel, according as her tastes may be. They're all alike on one point, their desire to marry up to their form, and meanwhile fill up their time with as much flirtation as possible. And when they do marry, most of them forget to leave it off."

"And who's responsible for that I'd like to know? You men, of course. You lead a girl on as far as she will possibly let you go, and then despise her for it. I never knew anything so unreasonable."

"Well, when one sees that a girl expects to be made love to, it's only polite to oblige her."

"If you are going to say such abominable things, I shall leave you," said Mrs. Templeton, rising with indignation.

"Don't run away in a rage, Alice. You know very well there's some truth in what I say, though perhaps I put it too strongly. You're right when you think I'm tired of the life. I shall go and shoot elephants in South Africa and get out of it all."

"Yes, I do know, and I only wish some of the girls who have flirted with you could hear what you've just said; it might open their eyes a little. But women talk men over just the same when they're alone, you must remember. And now I come to think of it, I've heard some rather harsh things said about you lately."

"What have they said?" demanded the young man quickly.

"That you didn't behave too well to Sylvia Burke, and—who's that?" breaking off abruptly as an unmistakably English couple went past and Blake raised his hat.

"Archie Derwent, a fellow I know a little in town. He's a very decent sort of chap. I see him sometimes at the club. That's his sister with him, no doubt. He told me he expected her today."

"I used to know some people of that name down at home before I was married. I must find out if they're the same family. It's an uncommon name. What was I saying? Oh, about Sylvia Burke. You know everybody thought you and she were engaged."

"Then everybody was wrong. No, I shall never marry—unless I can find someone like you, Alice. What a pity I didn't meet you before you were irrevocably tied to my respected uncle."

"You impertinent man! As if I should have looked at you when Harry was about. And I wish you wouldn't talk as if he were about a hundred. You know very well there's only five years between you. Harry, dear," as a tall, soldierly man strolled up to them, "here's Jim actually venturing to suggest that I should have preferred him to you if I had met him first."

"Like his cheek. Don't mind him, Alice, he doesn't know any better."

"I shall go and see if there are any letters," announced Blake, rising rather abruptly. "Will see you again presently."

Mrs. Templeton's eyes followed him somewhat anxiously.

"You look worried, little woman; what's the matter?" asked her husband, taking the vacant place by her side.

"I don't understand Jim," she said. "He was talking just now quite bitterly, so unlike his usual easy-going way. It really seems as if he had met with some disappointment lately. It was odd, his going off like that and leaving Sylvia Burke so suddenly. I wonder whether he was really in love with her after all. Certainly there was nothing wrong between them up to the night of our dance, in fact, I thought he would probably seize the opportunity to settle it, but he went away before the evening was half over, and I don't believe he saw her again before he left town. The whole thing is a mystery to me."

"I think I may be able to throw some light on the subject if you really want to know. But don't repeat it on any account," said Captain Templeton, smiling down at her.

"Oh, Harry, do you really mean it? Do tell me, I won't mention it to a soul."

"Well, it was like this. I had been dancing with Lady Leyton and she asked me to find her fan for her, said in her delightfully vague way that she believed she must have left it in one of the sitting-out places somewhere. Of course that entailed going into all of them to look for it. I never wish to have another such time. I kept rousing up couples at every step. And in the darkest corner of the conservatory, who should I come across but Miss Burke and a man. I couldn't see his face, but his arm was around her, and her head was on his shoulder, so they must have been going the pace."

"Harry! How could Sylvia have been so silly? But are you sure it was she? And perhaps the man was Jim himself?"

"I know it wasn't, because I met him directly afterwards and he said it was his dance and asked if I'd seen her. He went into the conservatory and I expect he found them. There was no mistaking that yellow gown of hers as it was the only one in the room. Old Jim's particular, and I daresay it fairly put him off her."

"I should think so, indeed. Sylvia ought to have known better. Of course that accounts for everything. She really is the most incorrigible flirt I ever met. Even when it's most to her own interest, she can't resist temptation, and then she loses her head and never knows where to stop. Well, she's thrown away the best chance she'll ever have."

"Miss Burke was never a favorite of mine, and if you want my opinion I consider that Jim is well quit of her. Also, my dear, if you don't want to be late for dinner, you had better come in and dress."

Jim Blake, coming to table d'hote that night, was most agreeably surprised to find that instead of the unprepossessing and dingy lady of German extraction who was his usual vis-a-vis, Nell Derwent and her brother were established opposite to him.

His first impression was of a piquante little face, not the least beautiful, hardly pretty perhaps, but eminently attractive; a small head, daintily set on the shoulders and a slender, rounded figure, encased in a frock which compelled even Mrs. Templeton's admiration.

"What a sweet little girl, Jim," she whispered. "I shall lose no time in making her acquaintance."

Miss Derwent was quite unconscious of both Blake's admiring glances and Mrs. Templeton's criticisms. She seemed to be enjoying herself immensely, and divided her attention between her brother and a small French child who sat on her other side.

They left the table before anyone else, and Mrs. Templeton followed them closely. Blake, strolling on to the terrace a quarter of an hour later, found them all in animated conversation.

"Miss Derwent and I have discovered that we are almost old friends, Jim," called out his charming relative as soon as she saw him. "Our families have known each other for ages, though we've never happened to meet. Miss Derwent, may I introduce you to Mr. Blake—my nephew, though you might not think it."

Blake bowed and promptly took possession of the nearest vacant chair.

"I don't think I've ever had the pleasure of seeing you in town, Miss Derwent," he said, "though I've often met your brother."

"Oh, it isn't likely that you would," said the girl with a quick smile. "I'm very little in town. I live with Archie, you know, and have 'done' a regular season. I was presented, of course, when I was eighteen, and I go up now and then on visits, but most of my time I'm down at Fairfield."

Blake vaguely remembered having heard that young Derwent had lately come into an ancient and encumbered family estate, and that money, in consequence, was none too plentiful with him.

"Don't you like London?" he inquired tentatively.

"Oh, yes," she answered brightly, "I'm awfully fond of it, it is so delightful to be within reach of good concerts and the galleries and all that. And I like going out; I just adore dancing. Only I shouldn't care to do nothing else for three months at a stretch, like some girls I know, though my friends don't believe me when I say so. They declare it's a case of 'sour grapes.'"

Blake thought what a charming voice and manner she had, there was a degree of animation and life about her not usual with the girls of his set. He began to think it would not be very difficult to enjoy himself for the next fortnight.

"I don't think you'd look as you do if you had been through the London season," he said. "Most girls are more like washed-out rags just now than anything else."

"The game's not worth the trouble in my opinion," said Nell decisively. "I like it for a time and it prevents one from getting rusty, but I'm always glad to get back to my own little room at home and gather my books and music around me again."

"Are you talking about music?" broke in Mrs. Templeton. "It's getting very damp out here; let's go in and have some."

A general move was made to the salon, and the piano turning out to be somewhat above the average Swiss hotel article, Blake sat down to it. He was a cultivated musician and played well. After him Mrs. Templeton produced her banjo and gave them several stirring plantation ditties, then someone asked Miss Derwent to sing. Nell had a sweet, sympathetic voice, and she sang two or three modern ballads with much artistic finish, ending with a quaint old-fashioned air seldom heard in these days,

but which was full of pathos that went straight to the hearts of the listeners and produced that hush which to a true musician is the greatest of all compliments.

After this Mrs. Templeton forcibly broke up the meeting, remarking "that nobody would get any beauty sleep, and the Swiss thought late hours positively improper."

Blake sat out on the balcony of his room, smoking a last cigar. The pathetic notes of Neil Derwent's song still rang in his ears; he leaned over the balustrade and gazed across the moonlit lake to the shadowy mountains beyond, humming them to himself.

"She has lovely eyes," he said, as he roused himself and went in. "Was it my fancy, or were they really wet with tears while she was singing?"

* * * * * *

Blake saw a great deal of Neil Derwent during the next few days. The morning after her arrival, he was lounging lazily by the lake, trying to decide whether it was too warm to go for a row, when he became aware of a girl, cutting rapidly through the smooth water in one of the gaily-painted boats belonging to the hotel.

A graceful woman never looks more graceful than in the act of rowing, and he regarded with admiration the elastic swing of the body as she bent over the sculls, and the long, steady strokes with which she sent the little craft swiftly along. She stopped when she saw Blake and rested on her oars.

"Good-morning, Mr. Blake," she called out. "Do you happen to have met my brother anywhere? He promised to take me on the lake this morning, but he disappeared directly after breakfast with some one or other, and I got tired of waiting."

Blake saw his opportunity and he seized it.

"I haven't seen him," he said, "but perhaps you will allow me to take his place if you want an escort?"

"If I want someone to row me, would be nearer the mark," laughed Neil, directing the boat to land. "I feel lazy, and I should be glad of a rest."

A few minutes later they were floating gently over the blue water. The girl leaned back in the cushioned stern and shut her eyes.

Blake wondered if she knew how long and curly her dark lashes were, and whether she wanted to show them off, but the expression of her face was one of such exquisite enjoyment that such a suspicion seemed unworthy. Suddenly she looked up.

"Did you ever see anything so beautiful as the Jungfrau this morning?" she asked. "It looks like silver against a sapphire sky. Archie thinks mountains are all alike—he says when you've seen one you've seen all—but to me they never look the same for five minutes together. They change with every change of light and atmosphere. I believe I like them best in cloudy weather, it leaves so much to the imagination. Don't you think so?"

"I fear I don't appreciate the clouds," said Blake, smiling a little at her enthusiasm. "I've had bitter experience of them on many an unsuccessful expedition. I suppose this is your first visit to Switzerland?"

"Oh, no, I've been here many times before, though never to these parts, and I love it more every time I come. These Swiss hotels are so amusing, too, the people who come to them, I mean; I often wonder why they do come, some of them. There was a lady sitting next to me at breakfast, who was holding forth to a friend on the subject of health; her one idea seemed to be to avoid getting wet feet. She had evidently come from some high mountain place, and I heard her say with great emphasis, 'I assure you, my dear, I found the only safe way was to wear goloshes continually.' Fancy going on a glacier with goloshes!"

Blake laughed. This girl was distinctly amusing. It was a very long time since a morning had passed so quickly with him, and he made up his mind that he should probably do a good deal of boating in the course of the next week or so. Circumstances favored him.

Mrs. Templeton took an immense fancy to the two Derwents, and many were the joint excursions undertaken under her able management. In a very short time Blake had constituted himself Neil's acknowledged cavalier. He walked with her, talked with her, gathered flowers for her collection, found points of vantage for her sketching stool, played her accompaniments, monopolized as many of her dances as possible, and conducted himself in every way as her devoted admirer.

At the same time he was conscious of a something in their relations which baffled and puzzled him. Neil's attitude towards him was one of pure friendliness and nothing more.

She received his attentions with the utmost calm; she was used to them and had come to consider them almost as a right. But she appeared perfectly unconscious of the fact that he was an eligible parti, and would turn from him to talk to Captain Templeton, or anyone else whose conversation happened to interest her more for the moment. This was naturally annoying to a man as unaccustomed to such treatment as Blake.

His attempts to draw her into anything approaching a flirtation was unavailing. She laughed at his neatly-turned phrases or retorted with little shafts of sarcasm, which went straight to the mark and somehow made him feel like a fool. She tantalized and irritated him; he began to wonder if the blue eyes that looked so straight at him, had ever known what it was to soften with a tender light, and to be unreasonably angry because he could not make them do so.

But the days flew by and one afternoon Neil announced to him that they had decided to leave the next day. It was as if someone had thrown iced water in his face.

He had grown so accustomed to being constantly near her, in the intimacy of hotel life, that he had never realized that there must be an end to such intercourse. He felt suddenly that he should miss her more than he would have believed possible.

But it was not by any means the first time he had experienced this sensation; he knew it would probably pass off in a week, and he resolved, meanwhile, to make the most of the time that remained to him.

There was dancing that evening, and after a waltz he took Neil out to the terrace and ensconced her in a secluded corner.

"What a magnificent night," she began. "I shall be so sorry to leave this place to-morrow. I don't think I ever enjoyed myself so much anywhere."

"And I," said Blake, leaning forward a little to be able to see her face. "Do you know this has been the happiest fortnight of my life?"

"Really?" she returned rather sarcastically. "I should have thought it was not nearly exciting enough for you."

Her tone annoyed him and he cast all scruples to the winds.

"I am glad you are going away to-morrow," he said abruptly.

"Even if you are, it isn't polite to say so. Shouldn't we be going in? It's getting chilly."

"You have stayed here too long already," he went on, taking no notice of her words. Do you know what you have done to me? You should have gone away before——"

"I don't think you quite know what you are saying, Mr. Blake," interrupted the girl gravely.

He could see that she had colored faintly in the moonlight.

"I think I had better go in."

"How hard you are," he pleaded. "At least give me something, some little remembrance of the happiest days I shall ever know. You won't be so cruel as to go away and leave me like this? Let me have one of those roses, it is such a small thing."

He had said very much the same thing to many women before; but to-night, carried away by the magic of the time and the surroundings, he was more than half in earnest. He bent forward and looked into her eyes.

For a moment she seemed to be hesitating, tearing nervously at the flowers in her lap with one hand, the other rested on the arm of the chair. Blake thought she was going to yield; he took the little fingers in his own.

"Don't refuse me," he murmured. "It is very little I ask, and you are going away to-morrow."

At his touch she sprang to her feet.

"No!" she exclaimed, flinging the roses far away from her into the garden beneath. "You're only amusing yourself and trying to flirt with me. You may think you are paying me a compliment. You'll excuse me if I say I don't regard it as such. I had thought better of you. Good-night."

She swept away, leaving Blake thunderstruck.

"Well, well!" were the only words he could find speech for, as he sank back into his chair. He made no attempt to follow her.

"Who'd have thought she'd take it like that? I might have been the dust beneath her feet. No woman ever treated me like that before. Well, it served me right."

He was so dumfounded that he went straight to his room and lay awake half the night, trying to concoct some form of apology which should not have the effect of enraging her further. He was down betimes the next morning, for he knew the Derwents were to leave by an early boat.

As good luck would have it, while he stood hesitating at the foot of the stair, wondering where he should find Neil, the door of an adjoining room opened and she came out. She bowed coldly and was passing on, when he stopped her.

"Miss Derwent, I must speak to you," he said hurriedly. "I don't know what you must think of me after last night——"

"I fancy it doesn't matter much," she interrupted frigidly.

"It matters to me what you think of me, for you have made me respect your opinion." He could hardly have said anything to please her more. "May I hope that you will try and forget my—— that you won't regard me quite as——"

He stopped hopelessly, for once in his life at a loss for words. Neil looked at him for a moment, and then broke into a charming smile

"Don't say any more about it," she said. "You made a mistake, and I'm afraid I was rather rude, but we won't part enemies after having had such a good time together."

He took the hand she offered.

"You're quite sure you forgive me?" he asked.

"Quite sure," laughed the girl. "Don't look so dreadfully solemn over it. There's Archie shouting for me, the carriage is waiting. Good bye."

Blake stood watching their departure until they were quite out of sight; then he turned away and spent the rest of the morning rowing vigorously, if somewhat erratically about the lake, after which he returned to the hotel and announced to the Templetons his intention of starting at once for the high Alps. Alice cast a significant glance at her husband as she received this information.

"Well, we shall be sorry to lose you, Jim," she said, "but I can't consent to be dragged up to any more of those inaccessible places even for the pleasure of your delightful society. We shall go to Interlaken, and you can join us later in Lucerne and travel home with us if you feel inclined. We've arranged to meet the Derwents there," she added as if by an afterthought.

Just about the same time, Neil, being whirled away as fast as a very slow train could carry her, was thinking to herself:

"It was very nice of him to try and apologize, though how awkwardly he did it. I think I gave him a lesson and made him see that there are some girls in the world who don't care to be treated as playthings, to be made love to one minute and forgotten the next. I wonder if I shall ever see him again. How silly I am. I don't suppose he'll ever give me another thought, except as a prim little country girl who couldn't understand a bit of fun. Yet, when he said good-bye he looked——"

But here she brought her meditations to an abrupt close and buried herself in Baedeker.

Blake, on his side, plunged with energy into the sea of guides, ice-axes, ropes and alpenstocks, which surges around the great mountaineering centres, during the month of August.

He made several very satisfactory ascents, came once or twice perilously near losing his life, and was aware he ought to be enjoying himself extremely. But the image of Neil Derwent was too persistently before him. She haunted him—he could not forget her.

He fought hard for his independence, was somewhat reckless in his climbing, made himself unusually agreeable in society, and even tried to get up a flirtation with a pretty American, on the principle of "Like cures like." But it was of no avail, and there came a day when walking up a sunny slope near Zermatt, he flung himself down under a pine tree and owned to himself that he was hopelessly and helplessly in love.

Having once acknowledged the situation, he proceeded to face it with characteristic energy. He had no cause to believe that Neil cared for him, rather the reverse, but that was no reason why she should not learn to.

Alice Templeton had said that they would all be together for a time before returning to England. He would go there at once and get the question settled at once. Having arrived at this conclusion, he descended to his hotel, packed his bag, paid his bill and started.

The next evening, Neil Derwent, going in to dinner, was accosted in the hall with a cheerful "Good evening, Miss Derwent," in well-known tones.

"Mr. Blake!" she exclaimed. "You here! Mrs. Templeton said you were somewhere in the Engadine."

The color had flown to her cheeks, her eyes sparkled, her pleasure was unconcealed. Blake thought he had never seen her look more charming.

"She ought to know by this time that I'm generally to be found in the place where I'm least expected," he said. "How are you, Derwent? Well Alice, here I am again. Couldn't get on long without you after all, you see."

He dropped quite naturally into his old position with Neil, but there was a slight difference. She was now and then a little shy with him, had lost some of her look of frank indifference, and was careful to keep more with her brother or Mrs. Templeton. A week, ten days went quickly by, then Blake, coming in one afternoon with his hands full of flowers, found Alice lounging in a chair on the verandah.

"Do you know where Miss Derwent is?" he asked, stopping when he saw her.

"She's just gone out. Sit down, Jim, I've got something to say to you. I daresay you won't like it, but I must speak. Jim, I don't want you to flirt with that little girl. She isn't quite the sort you're used to, and I think she might take it in a way that would surprise you."

Blake thought the warning came rather too late. Neil certainly had surprised him, though not quite in the sense intended by the speaker. But he simply said:

"How do you know I'm only flirting with her?"

Something in his tone made Mrs. Templeton look up.

"My dear boy!" she exclaimed. "Do you really mean it! She's the sweetest girl I ever met, and I think you're worthy of her. But are you really in earnest?"

"The fact is, Alice," began Blake, glad of a chance to unburden himself to his faithful confidante, "I've gone a regular cropper. I can hardly believe it myself, but that girl can simply turn me round her little finger." He laughed rather awkwardly.

"Do you think she cares for me in the least? I've fancied perhaps she did since I came down here."

"I'm sure of it," said Mrs. Templeton with enthusiasm. "I more than half suspected it before you came, and now I'm certain. She tries to hide it, but her eyes betray her. That was why I spoke just now. I was afraid you were only amusing yourself. Do get it settled before we leave, and be married as soon as possible."

"That's going rather fast," said Blake, "but it's what I should like. I'm afraid though, she'll say we haven't known each other long enough. But I can't stand the suspense much longer; I must know my fate in a day or two at the outside."

Events developed themselves somewhat more rapidly, however. That afternoon, as Blake returned from a walk, a telegram was brought to him, summoning him back to England on business. He read it with an exclamation of annoyance.

"Can't start now before evening, anyway," he said, glancing at the clock. Then the thought of Neil flashed into his mind. He went across to where she sat, the centre of a laughing group on the verandah. Seizing the first opportunity to do so unobserved he said in a low tone:

"Miss Derwent, I am called home unexpectedly. I needn't tell you how sorry I am, but it's perfectly unavoidable. May I hope to find you in the summer-house at the end of the garden in half an hour's time? I have a very important question to ask you. I think you can guess what it is."

The girl's eyes fell.

"Yes," she said simply.

As soon as she could she slipped away from her friends and made her way into the garden. Passing through the hall, she met her brother.

"Here's a letter for you, Nell," he said, handing it to her.

She took it mechanically and went on. Her thoughts were rather in a whirl, and she wanted a few minutes to compose herself before Blake should come to her.

She knew very well that he loved her, and was now willing to confess to herself that she loved him. She sat down on the bench that fitted into an angle of the low stone wall, under a canopy of late roses, and leaned her head on her hand, looking out over the sunshiny expanse of lake and mountains, and wondering if there was another girl in the world as happy as she. Her eyes fell on the letter in her lap; it was from Sylvia Burke. She tore it open.

"Poor Sylvia!" she thought. "I wish I could know that her affairs were running more smoothly."

The letter was very much in Miss Burke's usual style—an account of some visits she had been paying; a few bits of gossip; descriptions of two or three new frocks, and that was all. No—there was a postscript on the back of the last sheet.

"If you meet a certain Mr. Jim Blake in the course of your travels, remember your promise to revenge me. I know he is in Switzerland."

A sudden darkness swam before Nell's eyes. The blow was so utterly unexpected, that for a moment it stunned her. Then the scene in the morning-room at Fairfield rose vividly before her; Sylvia with her pretty eyes full of tears, Sylvia's voice owning to her love for a man who had deserted her, and her own half laughing words to her friend.

She had thought it quite natural that Sylvia should not wish to tell her his name, and had asked no questions. So it was Jim Blake—who in another moment would be there to ask her to become his wife. Only one idea was impressed upon her bewildered brain, he must not find her waiting for him.

She rose to her feet, feeling a little sick and giddy, with the intention of making her escape; but it was already too late. She heard his approaching footsteps, and almost directly he stood before her.

Nell sank down again and faced the inevitable. Neither of them spoke at first, but she could feel his eyes upon her, and made a feeble effort to put off the crucial moment by murmuring something incoherent about the view. Blake did not answer; he did not even hear her. Suddenly he bent down and caught hold of both her hands, looking straight into her eyes.

"I love you," he said. "Will you marry me?"

In his intense earnestness, the simplest possible form of words seemed to come most naturally to him. For one awful moment Nell sat as if paralyzed, struggling with irresistible temptation to sweep away all barriers and grasp the happiness one word would bring within her reach. It was only for a moment.

"For Sylvia's sake, for Sylvia's sake," she repeated to herself. Then she spoke, in a dry, strained voice, forcing her lips to form the words.

"You have made a mistake," she said. "I cannot marry you."

Blake dropped her hand and turned pale.

"Nell, you can't mean it!" he exclaimed in a tone of deep distress. "Don't play with me dearest. I love you. Surely you can try and care a little bit for me?"

Then, as she did not answer, he went on:

"I have spoken too soon. I have frightened you. Don't give me your answer now. Take a day or two to think it over."

"You have made a mistake," she repeated hoarsely. "Neither a day nor a year will make any difference.

Blake's face grew stern.

"Do you mean to say that all this time you have been flirting with me?" he demanded. "That you let me come here this afternoon, knowing very well what I meant to say only for the pleasure of seeing me humiliate myself? I can't believe it of you."

"I mean what I said," returned Nell, feeling she could not hold out much longer. "Let me go, please. You must think what you like of me. I can never give you any other answer."

Nell never knew how she reached the shelter of her room. She had a dim recollection of meeting Mrs. Templeton on the stairs and of her surprised look. She locked her door and flung herself on her knees by the bed, burying her face in the coverings and clutching them in both her hands.

Her breath came in deep, quivering gasps; she was conscious only of one all-absorbing fact, that she loved Jim Blake with the whole force of her being, and that she had sent him away forever, thinking her a heartless coquette. The bright afternoon faded into twilight and twilight into darkness, but she did not stir.

Her brother came to the door and asked if she were ill; she satisfied him with some excuse, her only desire was to remain undisturbed in her misery.

And Blake, on his side, sat in a corner of a first-class carriage, staring out into darkness, as they whirled through France, sleepless, angry and miserable. He, who had always been proud of his invulnerability, had fallen in love like a boy at last, and this was the end of it. He had trusted the girl, he had fancied she was different to those others that he knew; he had been tricked and made a fool of, and he wondered bitterly if he should ever believe in a woman again.

Verily, Sylvia was avenged.

Mrs. Templeton sought her husband that evening, greatly perturbed in spirit.

"Harry, I can't imagine what has happened!" she exclaimed. "I heard Jim ask Nell Derwent meet him in the garden this afternoon, after he got that telegram calling him home.

"An hour later I met her on the stairs looking like a ghost; and when I went to his room to see if I could help him, he was almost as bad, and was throwing his things into his portmanteau in a furious rage. She wasn't at dinner, and he departed without saying good-bye to anyone. She can't have refused him."

"Looks very like it," said Captain Templeton.

"I'd have sworn she was completely gone on him too. But you never can tell in these things."

He puffed thoughtfully away at his cigar.

"Well, I was never so disappointed about anything," declared his wife. "I had quite set my heart on it. Jim is a dear fellow, with all his faults, and she's a sweet girl. I shall see if I can't set things to rights."

It was easy to say this. But Nell Derwent avoided tete-a-tete conversations with Mrs. Templeton with the most anxious care, and with such success that the morning of her departure arrived without a chance having presented itself for any explanation. Then Mrs. Templeton took the bull by the horns and went boldly to the girl's room.

"Nell, dear," she said, closing the door, "don't think me impertinent or interfering, but I can't help seeing that something has gone wrong between you and Jim, and I am so sorry. I want you to tell me what it is and let me try and help you."

"It's awfully good of you, Mrs. Templeton," said Nell, fighting bravely to keep the tears from rising to her eyes, "but there's nothing to be done. Mr. Blake asked me to marry him, and I refused, and it's all over."

"But, Nell," cried her friend, "didn't you care for him after all? Couldn't you try to? He is so nice. I am sure he would make you happy. There must be some mistake. We all thought it was a settled thing, and he is head over heels in love with you. Do think it all over and change your mind. You don't know what you're throwing away."

"I can't change my mind," said Nell, with a pitiful smile. "You're very kind to take so much interest in my affairs. I wish I could be more satisfactory."

"I've managed to get very fond of you, and Jim has always been a great friend of mine," said Mrs. Templeton. "I won't say any more to you now, but I hope you will come and see me at home. Here is my address, and remember, I shall always be glad to hear from you." This significantly.

"I can't understand it," she said despairingly to her husband, later on. "There's a mystery at the bottom of this, I feel sure. It wasn't just an ordinary flirtation; I believe she meant to accept him up to the last moment. What could she have heard?" But she racked her brains in vain for an answer to the question.

* * * * * *

One day, towards the end of November, Nell Derwent sat again in her pretty room at Fairfield. She was not much changed to outward appearance—she had lost a little of her animated look, her pretty color had faded slightly, and her face, when no one was looking, wore a rather tired expression.

She had been entertaining a visitor, who was just departing with many voluble farewells.

"Well, good bye my dear, I really must be going. So glad to have seen you again. Oh! by the way," turning round at the door, "I met your friend, Miss Burke, when I was in town the other day. She was walking up Bond Street with her fiance; they both looked radiant."

Nell turned pale. Then her sacrifice had not been in vain.

"I hadn't heard of her engagement," she said.

"You surprise me; I always thought you were such great friends. But it is only just announced, and I expect she's very busy, as the wedding is to be at Christmas. Her mother told me Sir Arthur refused to wait a week longer."

"Who—who is she going to marry, then?" asked Nell faintly.

"Sir Arthur Newby, a very good match I believe; no end of money. She only met him this summer in Scotland. Is that five o'clock striking? I must fly."

Nell threw herself on the sofa as the door closed and tried to think. Sylvia engaged, and not to Jim Blake? She could never really have cared for him, to forget so soon. And by the light of this discovery, Nell's eyes were opened to several little traits in her friend's character to which she had hitherto been blind.

She began to think that Archie's estimate of Miss Burke was probably the most correct. So she had gone through two months of misery, such as she had never before experienced, merely for the sake of an idea. And now there was no barrier between herself and Blake. But how to let him know?

Nell was unusually silent that evening, though her brother noticed that she looked better and brighter than for some time past. As she was undressing, a bright thought flashed across her brain; she would write to Mrs. Templeton. On the strength of this she resolved to go to bed.

The next morning Nell went straight to her writing-table after breakfast. The composition of the letter took some time, but as she sealed it she congratulated herself upon having said exactly the right thing.

When it lay stamped and addressed before her, she leaned back and lost herself in day dreams for a few minutes. Mrs. Templeton would understand, she would say something to Blake, would arrange for them to meet, perhaps he would come down to Fairfield, and then . . . . The color rose slowly to her face, and Nell's thoughts faded in a golden mist. She roused herself with a little laugh. It was a perfect day, frosty and sunny; everything looked more beautiful than usual, she thought.

The "Morning Post" lay at her elbow; she took it up carelessly and ran her eye down the list of society notices, wondering if she should see the announcement of Sylvia's engagement. Yes, there it was, and next to it the name of Blake caught her eye:

"A marriage has been arranged and will shortly take place between Mr. James Harold Blake, of Thorn Park, Berks, and Marion, only daughter of the late Charles Fraser, of Palace Gate, W."

The paper fell from Nell's hands. She remembered Miss Fraser; they had met at Lucerne, and she had discussed her with Blake who knew her well. He had said that her great and almost only merit was that she was "genuine."

A curious feeling of unreality crept over Nell; as the irony of the situation dawned upon her she laughed a little. She felt as though she were an onlooker at the sufferings of another person. Her glance fell upon the letter addressed to Mrs. Templeton, which lay upon the table ready for the post.

There was a fire in the grate. She crossed over to it and dropping in the letter, stood watching it burn to ashes.

THE royal oculist, Duke Carl of Bavaria, has already performed nearly 3 000 operations for cataract, and every one of these operations has been performed between the morning hours of 6 and 8 o'clock, as the Duke declares his nerves are stronger at this early hour and his hand most steady.

At Home and Abroad.

As an instance of the thoroughness with which musketry practice is taught in the German Army may be mentioned a device which has recently been introduced with good results. The better to accustom the men to the interferences with sight in battle, clouds of smoke are produced by burning furze and wet grass, or by other means, between the marksman and his aim.

Nine people out of ten, if asked to whom Spitzbergen belongs, would reply to Russia. As a matter of fact, it belongs to nobody. This was the case even when the island was the seat of a large and prosperous whale fishing industry. The fishermen, who came from Norway, Sweden, France and other countries, and remained there three or four months every year, were the only owners the island ever had.

In Costa Rica no laborer passes a lady on the street without lifting his hat, and he seldom neglects to touch that dirty and generally dilapidated portion of his apparel when a gentleman passes him. In the rural districts no one ever meets a stranger without saying, "May God prosper the object of your journey." The same man will, however, swindle you out of your last dollar if he gets a chance, and if you ask him how far it is to the next place he will undoubtedly tell you a falsehood. But then his manners are perfect.

The Queen of England has had nine children, of whom seven survive; forty grandchildren, of whom thirty-three survive; thirty one great grandchildren, of whom thirty one survive. Of the great grandchildren five of them are grandchildren of the Prince of Wales, seventeen are grandchildren of the Empress Frederick; eight are grandchildren of the late Princess Alice; four are grandchildren of the Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha. This would appear to make a total of thirty-four, but two of them are the grandchildren of both the Empress Frederick and the Princess Alice, while one of them is the grandchild of both the Princess Alice and the Duke of Saxe Coburg and Gotha. In the course of nature the future rulers of Great Britain, Germany, Russia, Greece and Roumania will be descendants of her Majesty.

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The Curtis Publishing Company, Philadelphia

Our Young Folks.

REASON FOR THANKS.

BY E. R.

I'M just a little caged canary bird, but I'm going to tell you young folks my history, and maybe you will enjoy it and gain something by it.

My grandmother belonged to the famous family of Linnets, and quite a number of my ancestors had sung for kings and queens. My other grandmother, on my father's side was from the far-famed Canary Islands, and her clothes were of a golden yellow, while my Grandmother Linnet always attired herself in a quaint gray; not wishing to be partial to either, and still admiring both, I concluded to mingle the colors, and so you see me in a dress of gray and yellow, with a little more yellow than gray, because the latter color is brighter for a young fellow like me.

My life began in a little stuffy store kept by a great big German, who, with his yellow hair and beard, looked like a mammoth canary himself.

We were all portioned off into little cages too small for us to do anything but sing, and it seemed sometimes that even our voices were too large for the cage; but then there was room between the slats for the song to slip through, or the customers could not have told which one of us they wanted; but such a noise you never did hear, every fellow sang for himself and tried to out-do his neighbor.

It was early in December when two ladies came into the store and asked for a good singer. I liked their looks so much that I sang loud and hard, in hopes that they would take me; but my heart sank when I saw them clap their hands to their ears, and with a wild look of despair tell my master that he must select one for them, for they could tell nothing of our merits in such a din.

To my great joy, he approached the corner I was in, and taking the cage in his hand, said, "here is a nice little fellow. I am sure he is a good singer."

The ladies surveyed me critically with their heads on one side, and at last the little lady who wore glasses, said, "I will take that one, I like his looks."

So I was all wrapped up to keep me from taking cold in the keen, frosty, winter air, and soon I experienced a horrible sensation, for I was carried along at a terrible rate on something that shrieked and snorted louder than the biggest parrot in the little store. It almost turned me gray to hear it.

After a short time, I was taken off of this noisy thing, which I heard my new mistress call the 5.20 train; but I cannot tell you what that was, for I never got to see it, I was bundled up so. We then rode in a carriage. I knew what that was, because I heard the driver say, "Get up," just like the men did in the street near the old store.

It did not take us long to reach the house where the ladies lived, and then I was given a peep of light, and oh, how nice it seemed. After I had been in the house a little while, they put me in a nice brass cage.

I thought it was gold; at first, but after testing it with my bill, I found it was only brass. But I am not very proud, and I was so thankful to try my wings, and I really could fly. I had always doubted my ability to do so before.

After getting me nicely settled in my new home, I was hung in the loveliest place I ever saw; it was full of flowers, some in bloom, and oh, they were so sweet, and the next morning when the sun shone out, I sang and sang for joy. I felt that I could not be thankful enough for the good things that had come to me, and my songs were songs of praise and thanksgiving.

And I had still another pleasure in store for me, for when my new mistress heard my voice she came running, and showed such pleasure in my singing and praised me so much that I plumed myself afresh, and gave my feathers an extra twirl, so that they looked like epaulets over my shoulders. My! but I felt proud.

My next journey was in the carriage, when the maiden owing me, with her papa, mamma, and brother went to their own home, a little cottage in the village. Life passed quietly and contentedly for me until the following summer, when I was hung out upon a high porch where I could see up and down the street.

I was swinging away one day as happy as happy could be, when a little sparrow flew on to the railing of the porch and commenced talking to me, "You poor child you," said he, "do you think you are happy shut up in that cage? why look at me and my brothers and sisters, we fly here, there, and everywhere, we don't have to stay in a little square, inside of wires."

"Indeed we don't," and the chirpy sparrow family gathered around me, and they told me of the wonderful things that they saw in the outside world, and what beautiful things they had to eat and oh! what lovely cherries and berries they got; "but," said I, "my mistress says you were brought over from England to eat up all the worms, don't you live on them?"

"Live on worms, well I guess not, we leave those for the common birds, we are aristocratic," and so saying they all flew to a cherry tree close by.

From that time on, they used to come every day and talk in this way, until after awhile I really got very unhappy and discontented, and finally I got so cross that when my mistress came to talk to me and give me green things, like lettuce and cabbage, I would spread my wings and try to peck her finger; but instead of her getting angry at me, she laughed and said, "I will try him with some sugar, and maybe Dickie will get tame enough to eat off my finger."

So the next time she put her finger in, I pecked at it in just as mean a way as I could, for I was crosser than ever over being shut up, but when I drew back my beak there was something sweet in it, and it was so good; and after that I had some of it every day; but in spite of my being treated so well, I grew crosser and crosser every day, and I looked closely to every wire to see if I could not get out.

At last the weather grew cold and I could no longer live out on the porch, and the flowers and I were taken into the warm house together. Early one morning I looked out of the window by which I was always hung in the sunshine, and everything was covered with white. I could not think what was the matter until I heard the little boy say, "Hurrah! look at the snow; now we can coast."

All through the early winter my friends, the sparrows, had come to look at me through the window-glass, and once in a while I could catch something that they said about "poor bird," "no fun," etc.

But on this morning there was not a bird to be seen anywhere until nearly noon, when a small flock of them flew down to the garbage pail to try and get something to eat.

My mistress saw them, and said, "Poor birdies, I am going to throw them some crumbs, they must be so hungry," and then I watched them, and I know by the greedy way in which they ate that they were nearly starved.

I looked around my cage and there was my seed-dish full of the most appetizing food, while a sweet piece of apple was stuck between the bars of my cage, and only that morning I had had a fresh green leaf of lettuce, and then I thought and thought, and I felt quite overcome at my conduct, to think that I had listened to these poor little unfortunates who had almost nothing, while I was blessed with everything my good friends could give me, and here I had let myself get discontented and ungrateful, so I thought I had better make up for my failing by singing as hard as I could.

So I turned up and sang until the family all stopped talking to listen to me, and Rachel said, "Why, I never heard Dickie sing so loud before; he must be glad, too, because it is snowing;" but that wasn't the reason of my gladsome song, as I very well knew.

I sang for joy to think that I had been saved from becoming the grumpy, cross old member of the family, and instead of being thankful for all that I had, I was envying others who did not have half as much.

But now my eyes were open to my folly, and I determined to be contented with my narrow, but happy, quarters: and I have never ceased singing since, except when I was asleep, and I no more long after the "Oh, had I," but am content with the "I have."

NOT USELESS.

BY A. N.

ONE evening, as the sun shone out, just after the rain had fallen down, and made all the flowers and trees glisten with pretty diamonds drops, a snail crept out of his hole in a wall and looked about him.

Ah! it was a very lovely world he saw—all trees waved above him, huge gorgeous flowers reared their heads high up, for, you see, the snail was so small that the flowers and leaves and plants were like grand forests to him.

Far, far away in the beautiful heavens the sun was slowly sinking to rest. That sight was too dazzling for the snail, so after gazing about him for a short time, he set forth on a voyage of discovery. The first thing he came to was a most lovely delicate pink boat, floating in a pool of clear water.

"Oh, pretty boat," said the snail, "will you let me come into you?"

"Nay," said the boat, which was a fallen rose-leaf, "for I could not bear your weight, snail; I am much too fragile."

The snail watched the rose-leaf floating gracefully about, and then turned away with a sigh, because he was not beautiful too, like the flower.

Soon his sigh of regret was changed to a feeling of alarm; for he saw a great two-legged creature covered with white feathers waddling towards him.

"Quack, quack!" said the creature; and the snail knew that the "Quack, quack" meant, "I want a nice fat snail for supper."

Well, he felt dreadfully frightened, and did not know what to do, but, fortunately, there was a big leaf lying on the path, so he crept behind it, and hid till his enemy had passed. Then he peeped out, to make sure all was safe, and as the creature had quite disappeared, set forth anew. He crawled along over a big mountain, and then entered a thick forest. The snail thought this was all very lovely, and his heart swelled with joy at all the beautiful things the good God had given; then in his own peculiar way he sang a little song of praise to the Creator.

The leaves of this forest were glistening with diamond rain-drops, and the snail thought, "How I should like to possess one of those diamonds, all for my very own."

Just as he thought this, down dropped one of the diamonds on his head. This made him put in his horns very quickly, for, you see, the drop was so exceedingly cold it gave him quite a chill. When he was coming out of the forest, he saw a great two-legged animal, much bigger than his first enemy, and this is what the animal said: "I should think there would be plenty of snails out this evening, mamma; I'm going to catch some, to give to ducks."

"Oh, dear," thought the snail, "I wish I had stopped at home, for it is so very dangerous out to-night. Oh, how frightened I feel!"

He drew into the shade of the forest, and waited till he thought all danger was past, and then peeped out; but he drew in again very quickly, for there was the two-legged animal peering about near the leaves in which he was hid. Presently he heard it say, "Well, I think I have got all the horrid snails from this bed, I shall go into the other garden."

How glad the snail felt when he heard this cruel creature patter away. He rested for awhile to recover from his fright, and then he came out of the forest.

Just as he was feeling very bad, he heard someone say, "Father, what good are snails? They are such ugly things, I don't believe they are a bit of use."

"Don't say that," said another voice; "for every thing God made is of some use in the world, and we know He cares for the smallest of His creatures, even snails, so you have no right to despise them. I will tell you who used to think a great deal of them—your heroes, the ancient Romans. They considered them very good to eat, and used to keep them most carefully in enclosures made for the purpose, and feed them up to make them fat.

"Another thing snails are thought to be good boiled in milk, for people in consumption. So you see they are of some use. They certainly do a good deal of harm to the gardens, but they also help in a measure to clear away some of the dirt and rubbish that accumulates."

How pleased the snail felt at hearing that.

"Ah," he thought, "though I can't sing like the bird, and I am not beautiful like the rose-leaf, the good God has placed me in the world to do some little thing for Him, so I'll try and be content with my lot, and not grumble any more."

Then he crawled home, feeling very grateful to the kind voice that had said something good of him, and assured that he too has his little work to do, and was not utterly useless in the big world.

THERE is only one thing worse than ignorance, and that is conceit. Of all intractable people, an over-wise man is the worst.

The World's Events.

The Tartars take a man by the ear to invite him to eat or drink with them.

The oldest national flag in the world is that of Denmark, which has been in use since the year 1219.

The consumption of soap in India only reaches the modest amount of one ounce per head annually.

Remember that clear water is not necessarily pure water any more than cold air is always pure air.

The Shah of Persia has ordered that Jews hereafter shall have religious liberty. Mohammedan persecution of them must cease.

A naval writer says that neither Casabianca nor his father perished on a burning ship. They were drowned while swimming for the boats.

Tall persons are said to live longer than short ones, and those born in the spring to have sounder constitutions than those born at other times.

It is said that some shepherds can foretell the weather from the condition of the wool on the backs of their sheep. An increase in curliness indicates better weather.

In Venice many ladies have been seen shopping in bonnets made of glass. The craze has reached Paris, and it is said that glass bonnets will soon be sold in London.

With a piece of string and a little sand and grease some Hindoo convicts recently sawed through an iron bar two inches in diameter in five hours and escaped from jail.

So-Mayon, who has just received his diploma from Cobb University School at Lewiston, Me., is the first heir to an African throne who ever graduated from an American college.

Mrs. Ollie Hamby of Cobb county, Ga., is the twenty-sixth child born to her parents. Mrs. Hamby had seven brothers who were Baptist preachers, and has six nephews engaged in the same calling. Her descendants now number seventy-seven.

The latest form of ultra-refined hospitality consists in perfume warming-pans being used for the beds of guests. The favorite scent of each having been divined, the sheets are thus impregnated with lily, rose, heliotrope, or new-mown hay.

Many members of the Russian nobility profess that they can trace their descent direct from the line of king David. Four princely houses in particular, with whom nearly all the aristocratic Russian families are connected by marriage, claim this honor.

Servants seem to have the upper hand in Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. They refuse to cook dinner later than four o'clock, and insist on going home before dark, so that not a house has a servant in it after eight, and mothers have to stay at home to look after their babies.

In the sixteenth century the average length of a doctor's life was thirty-six years five months, in the seventeenth century it was forty-five years and eight months, in the eighteenth century forty-nine years and eight months, and in the nineteenth century fifty-eight years and seven months.

A journal in Madrid tries to increase its circulation by printing its news not on paper but on linen. Instead of ink, a composition is used which readily dissolves in a liberal water bath. After absorbing the news, the reader merely places the sheet under a public fountain, and there is a snowy handkerchief.

An inmate of the Soldiers' Home at Augusta, Me., has been smuggling in bottles of whisky in a hole he carved in his wooden leg. The last time he disappeared they searched for him until they found him lying dead drunk in a graveyard, with his wooden leg unstrapped and the empty flask in the hole in the leg.

Parisian street-musicians have a better check on the member of the party that takes up the collection than is furnished by waybills or bell-punches. The cashier goes round with a plate in one hand and five live flies in the other; when his accounts are audited, he has to let the flies escape one by one in the presence of his associates.

There are 1,500 people upon the German emperor's list of employes, including 350 female servants, who are engaged in looking after the twenty-two royal palaces and castles that belong to the crown. Their wages are small. The women receive not more than $12 a month, and the men servants, who number over 500, from $15 to $25 a month.

Queen Victoria's chief bodily ill now is the pain in the finger whereon she wears the wedding and engagement rings given her by Prince Albert. Her hand has grown too fat for her rings, and she will not have them cut. They cannot be removed in any other way, and it is now a question whether her Majesty will forego her pretty sentiment or continue to suffer acute physical pain.

The "ten best short poems" discussion resulted in six hundred lists being brought out. The following was made the prize list: "Elegy in a Country Churchyard," Gray; "Thanatopsis," Bryant; "A Psalm of Life," Longfellow; "The Raven," Poe; "Charge of the Light Brigade," Tennyson; "The Skylark," Shelley; "The Chambered Nautilus," Holmes; "Maud Muller," Whittier; "The Bridge of Sighs," Hood; "Burial of Sir John Moore," Wolfe.

THE LASTING GOOD.

Riches chance may take or give;
Beauty lives a day and dies;
Honor lulls us while we live;
Mirth's a cheat, and pleasure flies.

Is there nothing worth our care?
Time, and chance, and death our foes?
If our joys so fleeting are,
Are we only tied to woes?

Let bright virtue answer No;
Her eternal powers prevail
When honors, riches, cease to flow,
And beauty, mirth, and pleasure fail.

HUNTERS AND HUNTED.

This is the hunting season of most kinds of game in civilized parts of the world. But of all animals so made game of, nothing is of more interest perhaps, supposing it less full of danger and excitement, than baboon-hunting on an African farm. Stock farmers in South Africa have to contend with many natural hindrances and difficulties, and not the least among these must be reckoned the constant depredations of wild carnivora. The most destructive animals still to be found there are the panther, known locally as the tiger, the jackal, the lynx, the wild cat, and the baboon. In order to cope with these depredators, trapping and poisoning are largely resorted to, and farmers' poisoning clubs, subsidized by government, are a regular institution in many districts of the colony.

While poison is most effectively used against burrowing creatures of the jackal kind, baboons are best dealt with in open warfare with the rifle, and large baboon-hunting parties are often got up among neighboring farmers. The special character of baboon-hunting is derived from the fact that baboons are generally found in large troops, numbering up to eighty or a hundred or more. So long as they are left undisturbed in their strongholds, so long must the farmer be content to see the sum of his losses in stock grow bigger every day. Single-handed not much can be done, for baboons are difficult to approach, and if surprised at close quarters they have a good idea of defending themselves with large stones.

It is one of the farmer's most tantalizing experiences to stand at the door of his homestead, gun in hand, and see the baboons just out of range on the rocky sky-line a few hundred yards away—now springing on all fours like a large dog, now squatting on their haunches like a Bushman—and to know that the cunning beasts are just watching till his back is turned that they may seize their opportunity to swoop down and raid his flocks. Their predatory methods, too, are revoltingly cruel, and baboon-handled stock can always be recognized at a glance. They will attack cattle, tearing the udders away with their long powerful hands, and sheep and goats are often found by the herdsmen with their hindquarters stripped of the flesh right to the bone, and left to die in slow torture.

These facts are mentioned to show that the farmer has little cause to love baboons, and that it is to the interest of those who suffer from the raids of these merciless freebooters to combine in force, so as to kill off as many of the common enemy at each attack as possible.

And now to come to the plan of campaign. An open assault by day is of little use, for the almost human intelligence of the baboon is proverbial. At the first sign of an enemy's approach the deep barking of the simian sentinel sounds a warning note to the rest, and immediately the whole troop is seen making off.

So, to ensure a successful hunt, it is needful to begin circumventing the enemy the day before. The Kaffir herdsmen are sent out towards sunset and instructed to form a wide circle round the baboons' feeding ground. Quietly narrowing the circle, they gradually head the scattered feeders towards one particular place which has been agreed upon.

Meanwhile, from the neighboring farms in the district, one after another rides to the appointed rendezvous at the homestead. A good meet will muster a dozen or fifteen guns. After suitable refreshment, and perhaps two or three hours' sleep till after midnight, the party of sportsmen make their way by moonlight to the scene of action.

Between three and four in the morning a falling stone or a cracking mimosa branch sets the watchers on the alert. By-and-by in the gray light a baboon is sighted cautiously coming out to take his morning observations. Crack! goes a rifle. The baboon leaps up in the air, and a blood-curdling scream, startlingly human, proclaims that one of the assassins of the sheep-kraal has met his righteous fate. Taken by surprise, the whole troop rushes out to escape, and for the next few minutes things are lively.

Unless some unguarded point affords a loop-hole of escape the number left dead upon the field of battle will be very often as many as thirty or forty, or even more. As the Indians' victory was not complete until the scalps of their fallen foes adorned their waist-belts, so the last thing the baboon hunter does is to secure the tails of the slain.

For the tail of a baboon the government offers a fixed tariff for the predatory animals according to their size and destructiveness as an encouragement to the farmers and some compensation for their loss of time. Between six and seven the sportsmen are back at the homestead for an early breakfast before they ride off again to their respective farms. The return from a baboon hunt is generally awaited by the feminine portion of the farmer's household with some degree of suspense and uneasiness. For in the uncertain light of the early morning it is not difficult to mistake a man for a baboon, and the men sometimes find the bullets whizzing around at rather too close quarters to be pleasant.

Wild shooting, or an incautious change of position by one of the party in the excitement of the moment in order to get a better aim, have been known to lead to narrow escapes; and casualties are on record which have resulted in a tragic termination of the hunt.

Grains of Gold.

Hasty people drink the wine of life scalding hot.

If the counsel be good, what matters who gave it?

Seldom speak of yourself, and always with modesty.

Our acts make or mar us; we are the children of our own deeds.

He must be a thorough fool who can learn nothing from his own folly.

When men try to get more good than comes from well doing, they always get less.

No man is ever indifferent to the world's good opinion until he has lost all claim to it.

If you give the slightest countenance to evil, you become guilty of it, and responsible yourself.

A man's good fortune often turns his head; his bad fortune as often averts the heads of his friends.

Some people will never learn anything; for this reason—that they understand everything too soon.

It is better to keep children to their duty by a sense of honor and by kindness, than by the fear of punishment.

That is such a good, brimful word, hearten! It gives you the reason why. Nobody can be low in their mind until they have first got low in their heart.

Femininities.

When a girl falls in love, she begins to doubt whether the angels have such a good time after all.

Pearls which are perfectly rounded are the most valuable; next come the pear-shaped, and lastly, the egg-shaped.

Papa, to mamma: "It is wonderful what becomes of all the pins made!" The baby, suddenly: "Wow! Yow! Yow!"

Minnie: "It is just possible that I may marry him; but I am afraid it was my money that attracted him." Helen: "There! I knew there must be something."

Insurance companies report that many small fires are caused by lace curtains blowing on to the flame of a spirit lamp when the hair is being curled near an open window.

The Duchess of Portland recently revived a fashion that was started some time ago in France—that of wearing gloves with an armorial crest prettily embroidered on their backs.

The Ameer of Afghanistan has become a victim to the cycling craze, but with the Oriental's love of ease, he uses a tripiet machine and leaves all the actual work to his two pedallers.

Mrs. De Society: "What a lovely baby that is we just passed!" Mrs. De Fashion: "Yes; it's mine." Mrs. De Society: "Indeed!" Mrs. De Fashion: "Oh, I am sure of it. I recognize the nurse."

An interesting character is Mrs. Jacob Wallace, ninety-two years old, who has lived in the same house on Dutch neck in Waldoboro, Me., for seventy-one years, and who has smoked a pipe every day in the last sixty years.

A beauty specialist advises that for some days previous to any occasion when a woman desires to look her very best, she should be careful not to take a long train ride. Railway traveling is said to have a very jading effect on the features.

One of the drawbacks connected with Queen Victoria's lofty station is the law that forbids her reading documents, or receiving any letters except from her own family until after they have been scrutinized by the person in charge of the royal correspondence.

For the first time in the history of the English colonial courts a woman has been admitted to the bar, in the person of a young Jewess, Miss Ethel Benjamin. She is now a barrister and solicitor duly qualified to practice in the supreme court of New Zealand.

The Duchess of York, even as a little girl, was always tremendously busy and a strict economist of time. Chatting with visitors, she would still go on with her knitting or stitching. She has often been heard to wish that the hours of each day were more than twenty-four.

Cold baths are not so widely prescribed as health promoters as they were a few seasons ago. Not many women can take them in winter time with benefit. Tepid water is in most cases safer; and if the operation is indulged in at bedtime instead of in the morning, it is a capital sleep inducer.

The Empress of Austria weighs less than any crowned royal lady in Europe, her weight being only a little over 98 pounds. The Queen of Italy weighs 200; the Queen-Regent of Spain, 186; the ex-Queen Isabella of Spain, 252, and the Queen-Regent of the Netherlands, 210.

Queen Margaret of Italy has found a novel use for the phonograph. She has a rare gift of improvising on the piano, but, like many others who have this power, she cannot recall the melodies she has been playing. Now, however, a phonograph is placed on the piano, and when the Queen plays it records the fleeting fancies of the musician.

Mr. Meek, to his employer: "I am compelled to ask you for an increase in pay. My family expenses are about double what they were last year." Mr. Wholesale: "Why, how's that? I hadn't heard there had been any increase in your family." Mr. Meek: "No, it's not that. But Mr. Welloff, who lives next door to us, gives his wife a new dress or hat almost every week."

Mrs. Newrich, at the bookseller's: "And can you recommend that book you were showing me yesterday afternoon—Ivanhoe, I think you called it?" Assistant: "Certainly, madam. It is one of the classics." Mrs. Newrich: "Excuse me, I think you must be mistaken there, for we have a lot of classics in our library, and they are all bound in green morocco. The book you showed me yesterday was only in cloth."

According to a physician, bright sunshine is the best means of making the hair light-colored, healthy and strong. All sailors will tell you how rapidly the hair grows when on board ship in the tropics. Fair-haired mariners outnumber their dark-haired shipmates by two or three to one. This conclusively proves that the sun easily bleaches hair, and also that exposure to the sun results in a strong and rapid growth of hair.

Niece: "Aunty dear, the young artist Herr Schmidt again entreated me at the ball last evening to send him my photograph, which, he says, will be of inestimable value to him in painting his new picture. He promises to return it as soon as the picture is finished. May I give it to him?" Aunt: "Well, I think it will be all right if you enclose with it a picture of your mother, or some elderly person; to send your picture alone would be a terrible breach of etiquette."

Masculinities.

The Persians shave themselves as a sign of mourning.

He who is about to marry should consider how it is with his neighbors.

Some men get along much faster if they didn't lose so much time telling other people how smart they are.

To reprove small faults with undue vehemence is as absurd as if a man should take a great hammer, because he saw a fly on a friend's forehead.

Mrs. Gladstone always selects her husband's attire for the day, and in particular arranges for his buttonhole bouquet, in which he is most fastidious.

Baron William Rothschild has all his food prepared according to the strictest Jewish laws and takes his own cooking utensils with him wherever he goes.

Many a true heart that would have come back like a dove to the ark, after its first transgression, has been frightened beyond recall by the savage conduct of an unforgiving spirit.

"There is some cloud resting on Squander. Every time I meet him he is gloomier than before. He must owe a lot of money." "That isn't what troubles him, though. It's because he can't owe any more."

"Don't you think it proper that young girls should learn to play the piano before they are married?" "Indeed I do! For then they can prove the sincerity of their love for their husbands by giving it up after marriage."

Parson Johnson: "You must nevah cherish an enmity against younah neighbor, Mrs. Jackson; if younah neighbor does yo' an injury, yo' must forget it." Mrs. Jackson: "An' so I does forget it, pahson; but I'se got a powerful bad memory, and I keeps forgetting dat I'se forgotten it."

The Duke of Westminster and the Duke of Wellington have fallen in with the movement now going on in England for the opening of museums and similar public institutions on Sunday, and have thrown open the picture galleries and other halls of their London palaces to the public on this day.

A Pennsylvania woman became indignant at her husband's tippling habits, and the other night, while he lay on his bed in alcoholic repose, she sewed him in the bedclothes and beat him with a whip. He had her arrested for assault and battery, but the Judge dismissed the case and put the fellow in jail for ten days.

"Dear," she said softly, "I have cruelly deceived you." His brow darkened. He had heard such talk before—on the stage. "Go on," he hissed. "I—I told you," she stammered, "that I had taken a course of lessons at the cooking school. It was fa—false!" He staggered back. Then the full meaning of her confession dawned upon him. With a wild cry of joy he strained her to his exulting heart.

Ex-President Cleveland has bought a fish pond near his Gray Gables estate. It is already fairly well populated with fish, but Mr. Cleveland intends to carefully stock it with black bass, pickerel and perch. The pond has been a favorite resort for Mr. Cleveland during previous fishing seasons, and he wants to make it better than ever. Mr. Cleveland purposes to build a lodge at the water side, where he will entertain those who come to call upon him at Gray Gables.

Mrs. Louisa Williams, of San Leandro, Cal., walks for a quarter of a mile over a stony road on her bare knees once a year to keep a vow. Two weeks ago she accomplished the feat for the seventeenth time. Seventeen years ago she prayed that her husband's sight might be restored. She vowed that if her prayer was answered she would walk on her bare knees from her house to the church once a year. Her husband regained his sight, and the woman has kept her vow.

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The Ladies' Home Journal

Philadelphia

Latest Fashion Phases.

Cloths of new and good sorts are of unusually fine texture, and look so rich that it would seem as if they might stand on their own merits without much attempt at ornamentation, but it doesn't work that way in models.

One dress seen was stone gray broadcloth of a quality whose fineness had never been reached until this season, but when it came to making there was trimming even for the skirt. There were two panels of bright green velvet, and these were emphasized by a delicate embroidery in gilt. On the bodice were yoke, sleeve caps, belt, and slashes at the darts, all showing the bright velvet, and here and again was the tracery of gilt. This gown's most singular feature, one that would be apparent only in front view, was that the skirt panels were of unequal lengths.

In another velvet trimmed rig the skirt's one panel was outlined with several rows of stitching. The goods was cheviot in a new shade of fawn, and the velvet of panel, vest, and insertions on bodice fronts and sleeves was of a darker tone. Braid and tiny buttons also trimmed the fronts, and the belt was tan leather clasping with a silver buckle.

Relief of color is something that is almost paradoxical in a plaid dress, since relief has for several seasons signified merely a tiny dash of brightness here and there, but relief is possible—yes, necessary—in a bright plaid costume, and the way to gain it is a task for the best judge of color effects.

Plaids are abundant in the shops, and on the streets hosts of separate plaid skirts and of plaid bodices show where most of the barred goods goes. In such use the question of relief isn't difficult, but when the two parts of the dress are alike, the story is a different one. On the solid color gown relief comes in small spots of brightness, and on the bright plaid it must be a touch of demurity.

As put in one plaid dress shown it came in bands of gray cloth and gray satin ribbon bows on the right side of the bodice, the gray matching that of the plaid, of which the rest was blue and red. All the rest of the dress was plaid, except collar and belt, which were red velvet.

The riding habit fit girl has the field all to herself just now, for if out of any group of women you find one with a perfectly plain tight bodice, it will be worth remarking. If the bodice is not some sort of a blouse, then it is elaborated by a vest, or it has a bolero likely to give vest effect to the portion that shows at the bolero's opening.

The modifications of the blouse are numberless, and the bolero has been merged into the blouse so cunningly that the grace of each cut is retained. Thus if you think the bolero is "cut off" and ungraceful, you can secure the length under the arm and at the back and the loose drawn folds of the blouse, while if you haven't quite enough stuff to complete an entire blouse, or if you want a vest effect, you can cut away the front in jacket fashion, making a fastening or not as you like and allowing the under bodice to show in a pretty relief of color. Warrant for this is found in new gowns, one of which was in scarlet cloth, trimmed with black chiffon and velvet.

One of the most distinct novelties of the season, and one which is considered most promising by authorities on the subject of fashionable attire, is the Tartan cape. The plaid may be either single or double faced, although the latter is preferable, and is made loose in front, fitted to the figure in the back with a belt strap.

The collar is high and quite flaring, and the epaulettes are moderately full and edged with fringe in shawl style. The buttons used on these wraps are either pearl or bone, and are of good size. The Tartan capes are designed for traveling or general wear, when warmth is a requisite.

For demi toilet nothing can equal the popularity of the fichu, although only the slender ones among us can dare to wear this pretty adjunct to a dainty gown. They are being made in many new kinds of lace and elaborately frilled at the edges and ends, but the form is practically unchanged.

They are worn with tight-sleeved gowns almost entirely, and a combination of fichu and large epaulettes is to be avoided, as it destroys the lines of the figure. The epaulettes, by the way, seem to be growing larger and larger as the sleeves diminish.

Quite a new fancy is to have a fur-trimmed velvet toque to match the set of boa and muff. Muffs promise to be a very important item, too, and will be worn without reference to other articles of dress. The newer ones are quite large, and I noticed the prevalence of gray. Another new style is to have one's velvet coat trimmed with fur in a very original way. I saw a black velvet jacket trimmed with sable, the latter material being used in bows on the shoulder and at the belt, while the belt itself was of the fur.

The popularity of brown, in all shades has made the tan cape a certainty. The craze for braiding finds ample opportunity for display on these capes, and most of them are so decorated. Others have strapped seams, and some exceeding swell affairs have flaring collars covered with lace applique, and a jabot or cravat of net ornamented in the same way.

The chief millinery novelties are the plisse and plaid velvets, which are likely to be seen everywhere. The plisse stands in the lead, but some of the plaids are very artistic, and are just sufficiently bright in color to relieve the rather neutral tints of the hats and feathers. For tips and plumes are far from being banished, in spite of their use during the summer. On the contrary ostrich plumes of various length, but principally full ones of medium size will trim the most expensive as well as some of the more moderate hats. Black and white in strong contrast is also to continue in favor.

The very newest rain cloak is of cravenette; made in the form of a Newmarket, or somewhat approaching that in shape. Its distinguishing feature is the new idea in regard to the cutting of it. The pleated sleeve is set in right from the neck, which gives ample room in the armhole, without spoiling the shape of the garment.

Another advantage is the crescent shaped pocket, one on either side, which is so arranged that a slit above the pocket allows the wearer to pass her hand through and hold up her dress. Every woman knows what a comfort that will be. The cost is very stylish with turned-over revers in the front and a high rolled over collar. The back is drawn into the figure with a belt strap, and the whole style of the wrap is excellent, with none of the disfiguring effect of the ordinary waterproof.

Plain rough serge trimmed with plaid is fashionable for school frocks, and is thought to be more becoming. A pretty design is in dark blue, with a full sleeveless waist of green and blue plaid, cut out over the shoulders and showing a yoke of the blue. The sleeves are of the blue, to match the yoke and skirt, and the only other plaid is a band around the skirt.

Another style which is attractive is of dark blue serge, with skirt trimmed with four rows of black braid. The skirt is gored all around. The waist is like a blouse, and opens in front to show a full vest of scarlet velvet; on either side of the front are small gilt buttons, and a lacing of black silk cord fastens around them and holds the fronts together. The waist has a stock-collar and belt of the scarlet velvet.

A green and blue plaid that is most graceful in design is shirred on the shoulders, and the folds are crossed at the belt, showing at the neck a V-shaped piece of dark green cloth. The skirt is quite plain, gored slightly in front and on the sides, but gathered at the back. The narrow belt which finishes the skirt and shows below the fulness of the waist is also of dark green.

Brown serge brightened by red trimmings is extremely becoming to some girls, and will be in fashion this winter. A smart frock of this combination is made with gored skirt trimmed with rows of flat brown braid headed by a narrow round scarlet braid. The waist is a scarlet blouse with bolero jacket of brown, trimmed around with rows of braid to match the skirt. On the scarlet front are three gilt studs which are very effective. The collar and belt are both of serge, braided like the rest of the frock.

The skirt and coat costume is to be greatly in favor this winter, and in very much the same style as last spring. Both serges and smooth cloths are used, and there are some especially smart frocks made of velveteen and corduroy. Velveteen is a most useful and effective material, and is quite smart enough for a girl to wear at dancing school. Brown is a favorite color, and requires no trimming, save for some fur, if the weather be cold, and some bright buttons. The skirts are gored, the waists either full from the shoulders and with blouse effect or made with a yoke.

A lace collar adds greatly to the beauty of the frock, with bright ribbons at throat and waist; fancy plaid ribbons are used to a great extent. The jackets are medium length, tight fitting in the back, the fronts loose, and either double or single breasted, as is most becoming; narrow-pointed revers, such as were on the coats last season, are again in style, and a boa or small collar of fur, with muff to match, gives a finish that is most becoming.

Cloth costumes, made in precisely the same style, are sometimes trimmed with braid, but it is considered smarter to have them quite plain. A blouse waist of bright flannel is worn with this costume, or there can be a waist of the same material as the skirt and jacket.

All girls over 10 years of age now wear shirt-waists, so with their frocks the fancy blouses are preferred. Silk waists are considered rather old, but there are plenty of patterns and materials to choose from in the light woolens—plaids and checks especially. Trimmings of plaid silk are used effectively on the fitted waists; collars, both the sailor and the stock, and belts give a bright touch of color and a youthful look that makes these severely plain styles much more becoming. Plain ribbons are too old and sombre looking, and even the light blues and pinks come under this category.

Poplin is a material that will be greatly used for girls' frocks this season. It is very effective in the bright plaids as well as in the plain colors. The younger girls will wear the plaid frocks with cloth jackets, while older girls will wear the entire costume of the plain color. Velvet and silk are both used for trimming, and even white lace and velvet can be combined on the waist.

A charming costume of dark brown has the skirt made without trimming, the front breadth gored, the rest of the skirt gathered. The waist is full, and has a bolero of brown velvet and a turned-over collar of white lace over a stock collar of plaid ribbon. A dark green poplin is trimmed with rows of narrow velvet ribbon the same shade put on the waist to form a jacket effect, while a full vest of bright plaid silk gives a youthful look that is most attractive.

Odds and Ends.

ON A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS.

For all the spread of gas and the electric light in America coal-oil is still the chief means of illumination for the vast majority of people. It is well then that this subject be properly understood.

In selecting a lamp it is wise if possible to choose one with a shallow reservoir, for, if the depth exceeds 3 inches or 4 inches, the oil is at too great a distance from the burner, and this tends to make the flame drop as the oil in the container gets low. The reservoir can be of metal or of stout glass. The latter has the double advantage of keeping the oil cooler, and of showing the amount of oil in the lamp.

Secondly—and this is a most important point, which is constantly being overlooked, even by responsible persons—lamps which have been put aside, or not used for any length of time, must not on any account, be relighted until the reservoir has been emptied of any oil left in it.

When required for use the lamp should be fitted with a new and dry wick, and filled with fresh oil after all the parts have been thoroughly scalded and cleaned. At all times, however, the reservoir should be made the subject of special attention, and, as it is difficult for the casual observer to detect the deposit, a rule should be made for the oil to be taken out and the reservoir thoroughly cleaned at short intervals of, say, three or four weeks.

The filling and trimming must take place by daylight; in every well-regulated household, it is, of course, a morning duty, but on no account should the operation take place near a fire or a naked light; this is a remark at which many people may exclaim as being an unnecessary one, and yet the rule is constantly broken, however good the theories of the person concerned.

At the first lighting the wick should be turned down for a few moments, so that the glass may heat slowly and gradually, thereby avoiding sudden breakage; it can then be raised carefully to the required height, and, of course, the lamp must not stand in a draught, when it will naturally flare and smoke.

Lastly, when lamps are not provided with an extinguishing apparatus, they must be put out by lowering the wick by half a turn of the winder, after which a sharp puff of breath may be sent across the top of the chimney, but not down the glass, as has been the fatal practice of many who have suffered from the results of such an obviously dangerous proceeding.

The cleaning of chimneys often proves a matter of difficulty. Are they to be washed or not? is the question so often asked. The only objection to washing them lies in the fact that when that operation is performed, if the glasses are not perfectly dried, the natural result is a breakage.

Many people aver, and, judging from personal experience, it is not a fallacy, that if new chimneys are put into cold water and gradually boiled, allowed to get cool, and thoroughly dried before using, they will not be so apt to crack when coming into contact with the heat. There is certainly some sense in the operation, which, of course, tends to further anneal the glass; but this having once been done, unless perfect drying can be ensured, it is as well to clean them with a dry cloth and a lamp brush, polishing softly until the glass is quite bright.

Sometimes, on the lamp first being lighted, a fog comes over the glass, as if it had been breathed on; this is often produced by the amount of lead which has been used in the manufacture of the glass, and it should be carefully removed with a little potash or a soft dry cloth before the lamp is used the next day; if this is not carefully done at once, it will adhere so firmly that no amount of care will remove the opaque film which obscures the light.

The burner is the next part of the lamp which requires attention. They must be kept absolutely clean, every day all the oil must be carefully wiped off, and the charred wick and dust scrupulously removed before the lamp is lighted.

Moreover, at frequent intervals, the whole burner should be washed or boiled in water and soda, so as to free it from even the smallest particles of dust and charred wick, which inevitably become imbedded where they cannot be seen, and which clog the openings, thus preventing the supply of air necessary to perfect combustion. In choosing lamps give the preference to those with burners which screw down, or which are provided with tight and well-fitting clasps or fasteners, and see that these are well fixed before lighting; accidents often occur as a result of careless closing.

And now it remains to speak of the wicks, and this is perhaps, the most serious point in the matter of lamps and their safety. First, and in this lies, perhaps, the greatest secret of safety, the wick must be well fitting, and the full width of the wick case; yet not "stuffed in" anyhow, for it must wind up and down smoothly and evenly at both ends or all round, as the case may be. The necessity for well fitting wicks cannot be too strongly insisted upon.

A YOUNG BOY CAN MAKE MONEY

Through our offer just the same as the "grown-ups." In fact, we would like the boys and girls to become identified with our magazine. We will gladly help them if they will simply write us.

The Ladies' Home Journal

Philadelphia

LOVE LIVES ON.

BY J. P.

The world is full of weeping,
There is sighing in the air
From loving ones o'erburdened
With a heavy weight of care;
Many hopes and dreams of beauty
That we feed our hearts upon
Have disappeared for ever,
Yet Love lives on.

From scenes where joy delighted
To spread its shining tent
The glow of youth has vanished,
The golden hours are spent;
The lovely flowers are faded,
The singing-birds are gone,
And graves are all about us,
Yet Love lives on.

Brothers Still.

BY C. S. J.

THE shutters of the shop in High Street were up for the night, and silence reigned in the lower premises of Messrs. Brentford Brothers. Upstairs in the bedroom over the shop the stillness was almost deathlike, for old Benjamin Brentford lay battling for every breath he drew; his two sons seated beside him, and the great King Death hovering above.

"Are you there, Mike?"

"Yes, father."

"And Bennie—where's Ben?"

"Here, dad—close beside you."

"Tell him to go downstairs, lad. I want to speak to you," and the old man's eyes wistfully followed the tall, handsome figure of his younger son as he left the room.

"He's a bonnie lad, Mike."

"A very bonnie lad, father."

"My days—nay, my hours—are numbered now, my son; and there will be only you and Benjamin left to mind the old business, and take care of each other. I'm not afraid for the business, Mike—it's prospering, and will prosper. What I fear for is—Bennie. I never look at the lad, but the words come to my mind: 'Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel.' And yet he's not all bad," and the dying eyes searched Michael's face wistfully.

"All bad, father? Never fear! Ben's a good chap—his heart's better than his head. He'll come out all right, don't you fret."

"Aye, aye, that's it, his heart's better than his head. If only I knew you would never thwart or cross the lad I could die happy. I would dare meet your mother then, Mike, and tell her all's well with her youngest born.

"He'll come out right in the end," continued the failing voice. "He's like his mother, Ben is. Many's the time she chafed at my prosy, practical ways—she was all fire and impulse, but goodness knows she was sound and true at heart. It never did to cross her, my bonnie Mary."

"Never fear, father," Mike spoke with white lips. "I will never thwart or cross him, save to keep him from peril to his undying soul. I swear it."

"Amen," whispered the dying man. Then, raising himself, he cried, "Where's Bennie? Call Bennie. Yes, yes, Mary, I'm coming!"

* * * * * *

It was twelve months later. The house of Brentford had settled down to busy routine, and business grew and flourished.

Mike's handsome face wore a look of happiness, for the elder brother had wooed and won the prettiest lass in Colcote. Kitty Summers was a winsome girl of seventeen, and folk wondered what she saw in quiet Michael Brentford.

And Kitty would exchange bantering jest and nonsense with the younger brother who walked beside them on their way from church on Sunday evenings. For it never occurred to Ben that he wasn't wanted. Mike had never said a rough word to him in his life; he always made him welcome, and so did Kitty.

"I want you to take me to Colcote Fair."

"To Colcote Fair! My dearest Kitty!" Mike stood aghast.

"Yes, to take me—your dearest Kitty—to Colcote Fair."

They were nearing Kitty's home after a long stroll in the sweet-scented summer night. Ben had not been with them this time, for they were discussing final arrangements for their wedding, which was to take place shortly.

In a month she would be his wife: she would be a dutiful, obedient little wife—of that Kitty was resolved, but she was not married yet; time enough when the ring was on her finger for her to acknowledge her bonds. To-night she would test that sweet, new-found power, and would coax, wheedle, or compel him to do her woman's will.

"You little witch!" said Mike. "You know I shall do no such thing. Ask me something else."

"I don't want anything else. I want to go to the fair."

"Well, little woman, all I can say is, I should be sorry to see you there, and I'm not going to take you."

"How dare you be so cruel! How can you be so unkind?" flashed Kitty. "It is the first favor I have ever asked, and you refuse."

"Be reasonable, dear," said Mike gently. His experience of women was limited, and this young man had never learnt that the way to make a fractious woman more self willed and petulant is to beseech her to "be reasonable."

"No nice girls go to Colcote Fair. It is not what you fancy, dear. It is hardly a place where a respectable girl would care to be seen."

"What do I care for that?" she retorted. "All that I know is, I have set my heart upon going, and you refuse me. It would surely be 'respectable' enough if you went with me," she added with something very like a sneer; "but, never mind, I'm going to Colcote Fair, and if you won't take me I know who will—Bennie won't refuse me!"

The words had hardly passed her lips before she repented them. There was a quick step on the gravel, and Ben himself stood before them.

"Of course I'll take you, Kitty, girl," he said with a laugh. "Has Mike been preaching already? Never you mind. Take your liberty while you may. He's a regular old sober-sides, and he'll clip your pretty wings soon enough!"

The girl knew the words were false; she knew Mike was perfectly right, but she wouldn't give in now, not she!

"You're a good boy, Bennie," she said laughing. "We want a little amusement, you and I. We can't all be staid and solemn: so that's a bargain—to-morrow you shall take me to Colcote Fair."

Then, tossing her pretty head, she looked straight in Mike's face, but her glance fell beneath the passion of love and anger in his eyes; even Ben's reckless spirit quailed as, without a word, his brother turned and strode away.

"Don't cry!" he pleaded, for Kitty's face was buried in her hands. "He'll soon come round, and we'll go to the fair together, you and I!"

"No, no," she sobbed, "I don't really——"

"Oh, but you do really," urged Ben, putting his arm round her. "He's jealous, that's all. Just take my advice and teach him a lesson; show him that you can hold your own!"

* * * * * *

Next day Michael Brentford went about his work with a heavy heart. It was the first time Kitty and he had quarrelled, and he had a horrible suspicion that she had kept her word and gone to the fair, for Ben had been missing all day.

Night fell, the shutters were put up, and at last with a strange feeling of uneasiness, Mike looked up the premises and retired to rest. He was roused by the ring of a bell, and going down found his brother on the threshold.

"You will perhaps explain what this means," he said angrily, "before you enter my house?"

"Your house, indeed!" scoffed Ben. "Take care, my good fellow, we are partners in this affair; what's thine's mine! But take care lest you lose what ought to be thine only!"

"What do you mean!" Mike spoke hoarsely, and his hand grasped the other's throat.

"I mean that I love her too—that I have loved her all along—and to-night she knows it! So look to your rights, I say!" And Ben, throwing off the detaining hand, brushed hastily past and made his way upstairs, leaving the other bewildered and half stunned by the shock.

His father's words "Don't thwart him, he'll come out right in the end," rang in his ears. He must have time to think; he could not go to the girl he loved with this torrent of bitter rage in his heart. So before daybreak he was gone; soon he would return, and try to see a way out of this misery and pain.

Going home two days later, he was surprised to see the shutters of the shop still up, and in his room a letter on the mantel caught his eye.

"DEAR MIKE," (it ran)—"Kitty and I were married this morning. I couldn't do without her, and she has taken me 'for better, for worse.' It is too late for regrets. I have treated you—my own brother—worse than I thought it possible for one man to treat another. We are going to America, do not seek us; I have taken money, and, may God forgive me, I have taken what I wanted most in this world—Kitty! You cannot forgive me; I cannot forgive myself; perhaps I shall win your pardon before I die.

"Your brother BEN."

For some moments Mike stood there like an oak bowed before a bitter storm; then, with a look of dazed despair in his deep eyes, he went out into the blinding sunshine and mechanically took down the shutters. Then silently, as though in a dream, he went through the day's work. There had never been one harsh word between them, and now his brother had done him this cruel wrong.

Poor little Kitty. Poor little wayward, foolish Kitty! She would work out her repentance in tears, for she had loved her grave lover as the ivy loves the oak!

* * * * * *

Twenty years have passed, and the business grows and prospers. Mike has never loved again, never wooed another woman, and has no son to succeed him. The old sign-board remains the same, and the firm is still known as "Brentford Brothers."

"For who knows," says the bowed, prematurely aged man, "some day they will come home again, Ben and Kitty—my little Kitty, and we shall be 'Brentford Brothers' still!"

MISERY AND INNOCENT SECRETS.

A skeleton in the cupboard is alleged to be the possession of everybody. Whether this is so or not, it is of course, impossible to say, and by no means our present purpose to inquire. What we are here concerned with is a special order of "cupboard skeleton"—secrets of a petty and even absurd kind, which, though usually perfectly harmless and innocent, have yet been sufficient to entail no end of misery to the people who hugged such secrets to their breasts.

In the South there is a gentleman of excellent education and attainments, who is endowed with considerable property. His life is blameless, his goodness of heart undoubted. And yet, on occasions when he has been asked to pen a few lines, he has blushed, become confused, and finally peremptorily refused, if there was no other way out of it.

Although extremely well-to-do, he never pays an account by check; having no banking account, indeed. These peculiarities have led to much comment among the people who know him, and their regard for him is not untainted by suspicion. They insist in believing that the man has a secret he desires to conceal. He has; but it is of a harmless kind.

The fact is that the gentleman cannot write. Although he received the advantages of an excellent school, and acquired there a considerable amount of knowledge, he was never able to master even the rudiments of caligraphy.

He can read writing easily enough, but when it comes to forming the letters of his own name he absolutely fails. Doctors cannot explain the peculiarity, and the unfortunate gentleman, with a sensitiveness that is almost morbid, is so ashamed of his deficiency, that, rather than tell the world of it, he prefers to be rendered the object of some unjust suspicion.

Another gentleman of wealth, with wife and family, had a habit of disappearing for a day or two at a time. At such periods, his wife was quite unaware of his whereabouts, and her suspicions being aroused by the frequency of his absence, she employed a private detective to watch him.

By means of his letters, he was traced to a little village about twenty miles up the State, staying at an old-fashioned inn. And what was his secret? Simply this, that he had an inordinate love of pickled onions, while his wife tabooed, in the most rigid fashion, onions of any sort. In order to gratify his appetite for this special article the gentleman was wont to visit the inn referred to.

The colonel of a French infantry regiment, who was inclined to ride the high horse in regard to family lineage, had an uncle engaged in the poultry business. This fact he kept the closest of secrets. However, the knowledge of his relationship leaked out to a private in the regiment, and in order to induce the latter to hold his tongue, the officer, for several years, periodically paid his subordinate considerable sums of money.

This money not being forthcoming on one occasion, the private published the information among his comrades. The upshot of the business was that the colonel soon after resigned his commission.

The bane of a certain well-known novelist's life, about which he is extremely sensitive, is that he has no memory. He can, of course, read and understand, but he never remembers save for a few minutes what he has read. His agitation on publishing a new book is quite painful to see. He is so fearful that he may unwittingly have plagiarized from some other book.

Having so treacherous a memory, he can never be certain whether an idea has been evolved from his own imagination, or whether it has been worked out from a shadowy recollection in some book which he has read. So while his book is being reviewed, he is ever on tenterhooks.

SUMMED UP.—It is estimated that the human family living on the earth consists of about 1,450,000,000 individuals. These are distributed all over the world, but so unevenly as to be worthy of remark.

Asia contains 800,000 000 people, or two-thirds of the human race; but it is not the most densely populated, having only forty six to the square mile.

That, however, is pretty dense when compared with America with its 100 000,000, and only six and a half to the square mile.

Still, Europe carries off the palm for crowding. Three hundred and thirty millions on her 3 892 234 square miles is an average of eighty four to the square mile.

The continent of Africa harbors 210 000 000, an average of seventeen to the square mile; while Australasia brings up the rear with an average of only one human being to the square mile.

Of the world's peoples, about 500 000 000 are well clothed and live in the houses furnished with the appointments of civilization; 700 000 000 are half clothed and live in huts, tents and caves—that is to say, are half civilized—and the remaining 250 000 000 wear next to no clothing, and have nothing that can be called a home.

It only remains to add that the relative proportion of white, black and mixed races are five, three and seven, and there is the world in a nut shell.

NOT IN THE EGG LINE.—In the polyglot dialect, "Yiddish," spoken by the aliens of the East End, London, there is a word which most humorously illustrates the tendency of people to take things for granted without using their own observation.

These foreigners call their Irish neighbors of Whitechapel and St. George's by the term "Beitzemers," which is the (classical) Hebrew noun for "egg-merchants." Now, as a matter of fact, very few, if any, of the Irish in these districts are in this trade at all, being generally tailors, laborers, and the like.

The word arose thus. About sixty years ago, an imaginative German immigrant judged it right to spell the term "Eirishmen" in a letter home to some of his compatriots. "Eier" is the German for eggs, and it was naturally assumed that these unknown people were somehow connected with the egg trade.

The Yiddish speaking fraternity abroad (who use German and Hebrew indifferently) substituted the ancient word "Beitzemers" in place of the uncouth German hybrid "Eirishmen," thinking that it sounded better and more euphonious.

So the singularly inapplicable name grew to be the popular one among London Jews, and no one thinks of pointing out and correcting the blunder.

CHARITY.—Taking charity in its larger sense, as comprising not only material help, but kindliness, sympathy, and gracious behavior, it is difficult to see why its influence should not be freely extended to those immediately around us who are on a par with us in external advantages. We little know how often those who we think have no need of us pine for the voice of real sympathy and kindness. The truth is, we cannot say of any one we know that he or she has no need of us. We all need one another, and we know not whose need may be the most pressing.

Humorous.

A DOUBLED JOY.

When all the tiny wheeling stars
  Their cycle-lamps have lit,
And, bending o'er their handle-bars,
  On roads celestial flit.

I trundle out my tandem fleet,
  With Daisy at my side;
We mount, and then our flying feet
  Propel us far and wide.

Along the smooth secluded pike
  We take our ev'ning run,
Two souls with but a single bike,
  Two hearts that scorch as one.

Very disagreeable gymnastics—A jumping toothache.

When is a ship like a book?—When it is outward bound.

The skilled burglar may not be wealthy, but he takes things easy.

Legend—A bare-faced lie that has grown old enough to wear whiskers.

To get up a dinner of great variety, cooks should be allowed a wide range.

Kiss—a simultaneous contraction of the lips and enlargement of the heart.

Teacher: "Name six animals of the frigid zone."

Tommy: "Four polar bears and two seals."

A young man who keeps a collection of locks of hair of his lady friends calls them his "hair-breadth escapes."

Miss T.: "I see you with that book a great deal, but I never see you reading it."

Miss C.: "I am not reading it. I carry it because its binding matches this dress."

Poet: "Let me tell you, sir, that poem cost me a week's hard labor."

Editor, who has read it: "Is that all? If I'd have had the passing of the sentence you'd have got a month."

"He gives twice that gives quickly," urged the collector, earnestly.

"True," responded Snagge, calmly; "but I've often noticed that he that gives slowly very frequently doesn't have to give at all."

MacDougal: "Heaven bless him! He showed confidence in me when the clouds were dark and threatening."

MacCallum: "In what way?"

MacDougal: "He lent me an umbrella!"

"What! You cannot mean to tell me you found the professor stupid? Why, he knows everything."

"I know he does," said the Sweet Young Thing, "but I'd rather talk with someone who knows everybody."

"Pat Murphy," said the magistrate, "the constable says you've been fighting. Now, what have you to say for yourself?"

"Plase, yerroner, Oi had a clane wholte shurrt on, an' Oi was so moighty proud av it that Oi got up a bit of a row wid a man so's Oi could take off me coat and show it."

"Mamma, what part of the body is the trombone?"

"No part of the body, my dear!"

"Yes, it is; because it says in the paper here that last night, while returning from the symphony concert, Professor Gridel fell and broke his trombone!"

"Sallie Twitters is to be married," said Mrs. Kilduff to her brother, who is a crusty bachelor.

"Ah," replied he, "who is her victim?"

Then, seeing a baleful look in his sister's eye, he added, "I should say, who is her accomplice?"

A gentleman lately dismissed a clever but dishonest gardener. For the sake of his wife and his family he gave him a character, and this is how he worded it: "I hereby certify that A. B. has been my gardener for over two years, and that during that time he has got more out of my garden than any man I ever employed."

"Charley," said young Mrs. Torkins, "I have made a discovery."

"I hope it isn't anything about athletics," replied her husband, apprehensively.

"It is, though. I now know why nature does not put any hair on the heads of young children. It is to keep them from becoming football players too early in life."

A rich but ignorant lady, who was rather ambitious in his conversational style, in speaking of a friend, said, "He is a paragram of politeness."

"Excuse me," said a wag sitting next to her, "but do you not mean a parallelogram?"

"Of course I do?" immediately replied the lady. "How could I have made such a mistake?"

"What in the world's the matter, ma?" asked Arabella, as her mother turned from the telephone and asked for the bonnet and wraps.

"I'm going right down town," said Mrs. Highrocks, and there was a cold glitter in her eyes as she spoke.

"I just tried to call your father up, and I heard him tell the boy to say he wasn't in."

"Patrick," said the doctor to his patient, a groom, "you're run down a bit, that's all. What you need is animal food."

And Pat departed, quite contented. A day or two afterwards the doctor happened to think of his patient, and called on him.

"Well, Pat," said he, "how are you getting on with the treatment?"

"Oh, shure, sir," said Pat. "Oi manage all right with the oats, but it's har-rd with the chopped hay?"

FACE AND FORTUNE.

"Prettiness may be a considerable advantage in private life, but it is no good in business."

It was this remark, made by a feminine observer, that prompted the little inquiry the results of which are here set forth. Are personal good looks of value as a factor towards success in the world of business? Or, on the other hand, is beauty of no account in the office and the show-room?

In quest of such information a start was made with the forewoman in a line of textile industry." Said she—

"The pretty girls who work here—what we call pretty, you know, sir—may be divided into two classes, those who forget they are pretty, and those who think of nothing else. The latter are a nuisance, and are often being sent away for neglecting work. But if a girl is good-looking as well as hard-working, I'm sure it's an advantage to her.

"Everybody likes doing with pretty people, don't they? and I tell you what I have noticed: Sometimes the boss himself comes into the shop with some special job that wants explaining how it is to be done. To save time he goes to one of the girls direct, and always, always, sir, he picks out one of the two or three who look quite pictures when they are at work.

"There's one girl in particular; neat and trim she is as a new pin, and, doing special jobs at odd times in this way, she now does nothing else. All the best-class work goes to her, and she gets an extra something a week; though, mind you, nearly every one of the others could just as well have been coached up in the same way."

Success in business being the point, the question of matrimony is outside the field of inquiry; but allusion may be made to an observation of a gentleman well in touch with working people.

"Amongst the scores of working girls and women with whom I am acquainted," said he, there is hardly one of marriageable age who, if she has any pretensions to good looks, is not married. Even if you can find one such who is still a 'Miss' you will discover that she is keeping company with someone—equivalent to an engagement—and that in all probability the day is already named. My experience is that amongst working women every girl at all pretty finds a husband."

From this the inquirer passed on to a big drapery establishment, and sought the gentleman whose duty it was to engage fresh hands. The query was put.

"Curiously enough," was the reply, "this is a subject which I myself have often pondered. The conclusion I have arrived at is, that given two young ladies of equal ability, one pretty, the other plain, well, the plain one will, anyway, be severely handicapped. The people who deal with us, if not positively wealthy, are at least well-to-do. They lead easy lives amidst pleasant surroundings, and they like to be waited upon by pretty assistants.

"Times without number I have noticed ladies seek out one of our best-looking girls to take their orders. Only the other day I saw one of our best customers standing in the silk department looking about her. 'Are you being served, madam?' I asked. 'Oh, I am looking for that pretty girl who is at this counter,' said she. 'I always come to her.' Needless to say, the most valuable assistant is the one who does most trade, so you see the benefit of good looks in our business."

Mentioning this statement to another gentleman in the same line, he made an important addition.

"I quite agree with all that your informant said," he remarked; "but there is one point he has missed. My own experience is that it is of greater benefit to a girl to be smart and trim than to merely possess a pretty face. It is the young ladies who from head to foot look as though they had just stepped out of a bandbox that we find most in request amongst customers. I am glad to believe that this is so, for almost any girl can cultivate herself into neatness."

An expression of opinion being requested from the proprietress of an agency devoted to the finding of places of all sorts for servants, it was readily given.

"There are, of course, some sorts of situations that when vacant go naturally to the best looking, likely applicant," said the lady. "A taking appearance is certainly of the utmost value to girls earning their living in this way.

"Lady's maids, however, are generally chosen simply for their ability, and I doubt if prettiness is here of any advantage. A handsome woman may not object to a maid of good looks rather beyond the average, but most ladies fight shy of particularly comely personal servants—not always, though.

"Once, when a very pretty girl had called here with a note from a friend in service, a lady who wanted a maid also arrived. As it happened, the two were in face and figure very much alike, though at a beauty show the judgment would certainly have been in favor of the servant.

"When the girl had gone, the lady asked if I had noticed the resemblance, which, of course, I said I had not observed. Two days afterwards the lady came back again, and begged me to see if I could induce the girl to take service with her. 'It would be so convenient to have a "double" to try things on,' she explained.

"I made the attempt, and, offering substantially increased wages, succeeded. The lady makes her maid put on all her new hats and costumes, and I am sure the beauty of the maid makes the mistress believe she looks equally pretty when she herself dons the article of raiment that has been experimented with."

As to pretty lady clerks and type-writers a gentleman concerned in their training was approached.

"Beauty benefit?" repeated he. "All depends on the notions of the employer. I have had gentlemen come to me and say, 'I think a lady shorthand writer would be of use in my office. Can you recommend one? Only observe this: she must be at least plain. I don't mind if she is positively ugly, for I don't want any flirting going on in my place.'

"Another individual announced, 'I want a lady clerk, as old and unattractive as possible, for I have read all about the pretty type-writers in the papers.'

"These, however, are decidedly the exceptions. Provided a good-looking pupil of mine appears trustworthy and businesslike, I have less difficulty in finding a situation for her than for a plain one. At the same time, trimly costumed young ladies of good address are more in demand than those who rely on clear complexions and chiselled features.

"A pretty face alone, however, will never win promotion in business; but the capable lady wage-earner, who is also personally attractive, is completely equipped for the winning of success."

FORESTALLED.—A London jeweler says that Lord C. came into the shop one afternoon, accompanied by a footman who bore a small case of green baize.

Lord C. announced that he wished to have a few words with the jeweler in private, and was conducted up-stairs. He carried with him the green case.

"This case," said his lordship, when the two men were together, "contains the jewels worn by Lady C. on high days and holidays. At present her ladyship is in the country, where she is likely to remain for several months. Now what I want you to do is to make me an imitation set precisely similar to the originals, only, of course, with false stones. Lady C. is no judge of such things, and will never discover the difference. You can retain the orginals, and dispose of them among your customers, allowing me the difference in value between the two sets. But I must ask you to let me have the larger part now, as I have a pressing necessity for money."

The peer took out a key, unlocked the box, and produced the jewels. The jeweler looked at them, and answered, "My lord, it is the simplest thing in the world to make these jewels in the way you suggest; but I must inform your lordship that the difference in value between the two sets would not be a penny. The present jewels are counterfeit. I purchased the originals from Lady C. more than two years ago and made her these imitations, which are such excellent ones that I am not at all surprised at their deceiving such an excellent judge of jewels as your lordship."

There was no more to be said, and his lordship withdrew.

THE FAMILY.—The family is the educator of the race. Here men and women are made. What they are in the world, that they were in the family as children. The family is the place where the first lessons of law are received, and where the whole character in view of law has a direction given it. The citizen is made in the family long before the time for voting or activity has come.

When Napoleon said, in answer to Madame de Stael's question about France's greatest need, "Mothers," he asserted the all-potent influence of a true family life. The family is the great means for the development of character. What a world does it present for the affections to abide in! Where on all the earth besides are sympathies so warm, love so pure and fervent as here?

All that gives value or beauty to human character finds in the family at once an atmosphere in which to expand and develop the elements which shall bring it to the highest perfection. The family creates a perpetual power which holds and moves evermore each individual of the circle. The parental love evoked every hour in providing, watching, guiding, throws back its influence over the heart and life of father and mother, and makes them what they never could be without it; it is a power which lends all the time to lift them to a higher and better place.

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